PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

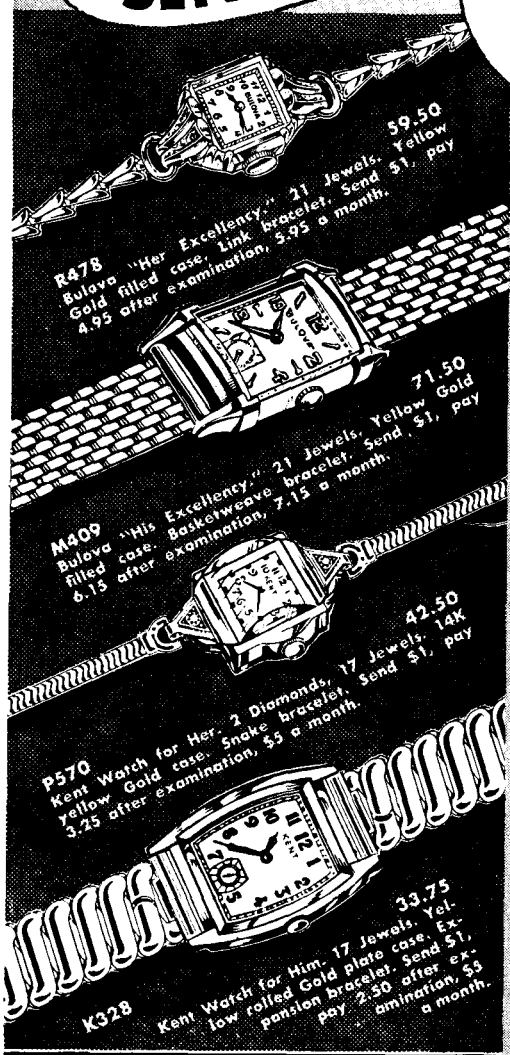
New York's Largest
Mail Order Jewelers
Established 1878

SEND ONLY $1

WE WILL SEND ANY ITEM YOU CHOOSE FOR APPROVAL UNDER OUR MONEY BACK GUARANTEE

Simply indicate your selection on the coupon below and forward it with $1 and a brief note giving your age, occupation, and a few other facts about yourself. We will open an account for you and send your selection to you subject to your examination. If completely satisfied, pay the Expressman the required Down Payment and the balance in easy monthly payments. Otherwise, return your selection and your $1 will be refunded.

SEND FOR FREE CATALOG



R478 59.50
Bulova "Her Excellency," 21 Jewels. Yellow Gold filled case. Link bracelet. Send $1, pay 4.95 after examination, 5.95 a month.

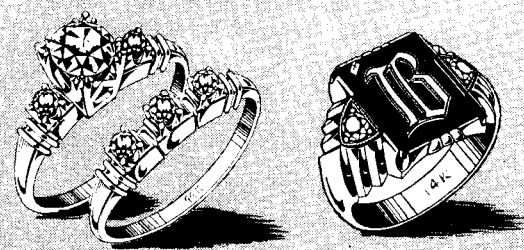
M409 71.50
Bulova "His Excellency," 21 Jewels. Yellow Gold filled case. Basketweave bracelet. Send $1, pay 6.15 after examination, 7.15 a month.

P570 42.50
Kent Watch for Her. 17 Jewels. 14K yellow Gold case. Snake bracelet. Send $1, pay 3.25 after examination, $5 a month.

K328 33.75
Kent Watch for Him. 17 Jewels. Yellow rolled Gold plate case. Expansion bracelet. Send $1, pay 2.50 after examination, $5 a month.

A377/C207 $100
3 Diamond Engagement Ring, matching 3 Diamond Wedding Band. 14K yellow Gold. **Send $1, pay $9 after examination, $10 a month.**

D219 59.50
Man's Diamond Ring with 2 Diamonds, center simulated Ruby. 14K yellow Gold. **Send $1, pay 4.95 after examination, 5.95 a month.**



F191/E773 29.75
Matching 1 Carat Zircon Engagement Ring with 2 side Zircons and 3 Zircon Wedding Band. 14K yellow Gold. **Send $1, pay $2 after examination, $5 a month.**

I726 34.95
Man's Onyx Ring with 2 brilliant Diamonds. His initial on velvety black Onyx. 14K yellow Gold. **Send $1, pay 2.50 after examination, $5 a month.**

All Prices Include Federal Tax

SEND $1 WITH COUPON — PAY BALANCE OF DOWN PAYMENT AFTER EXAMINATION.

L. W. Sweet, 25 West 14th St. (Dept. Z1)
New York 11, N. Y.
Enclosed find $1 deposit. Send me No._____
Price $_____. After examination, I agree to pay $_____ and required balance monthly thereafter until full price is paid, otherwise I'll return selection and you will refund my dollar.

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____

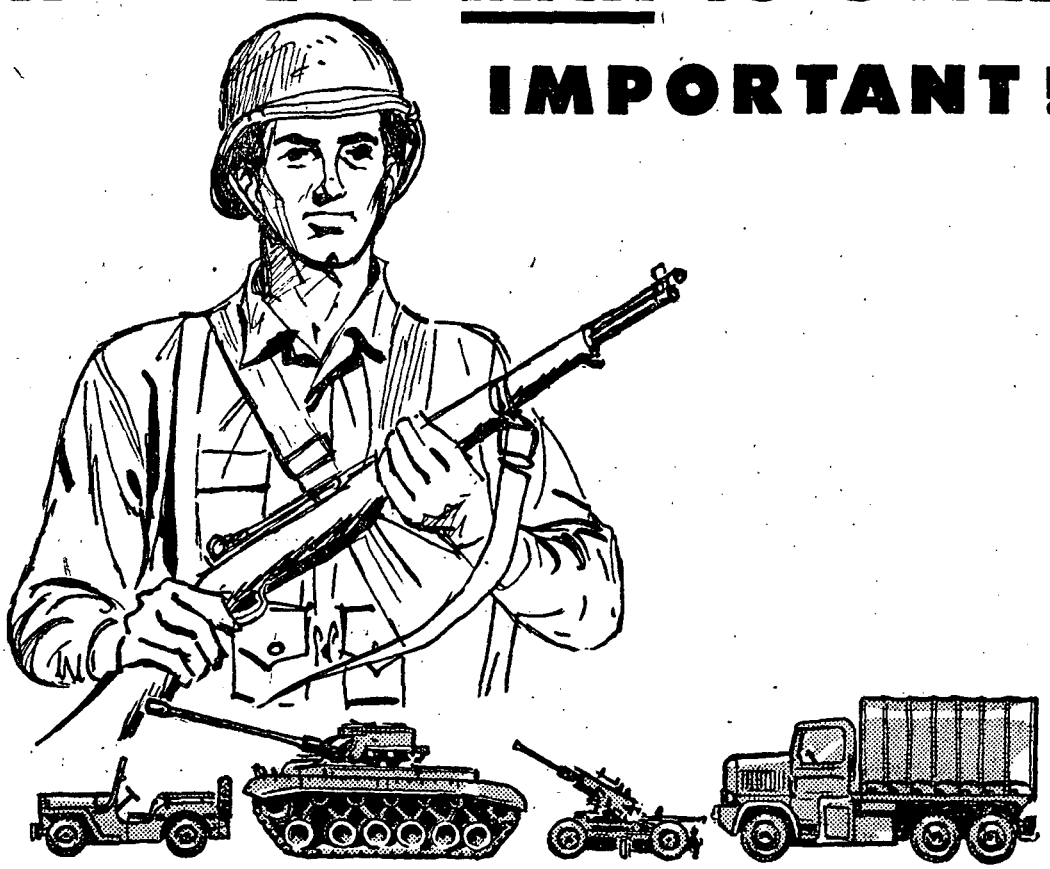
CITY_____ STATE_____

L. W. Sweet

MAIL ORDER DIVISION FINLAY STRAUS, INC.
25 W. 14th St., NEW YORK 11, N. Y. Dept. Z1

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

WHERE A MAN IS STILL IMPORTANT!



MACHINES are important. Inventions are important. But it's *men* who win wars and guard the peace.

No one knows that any better than the U. S. Army. That's why you'll find real men in the U. S. Infantry, Artillery, and Armored Cavalry.

These arms—the Combat Forces—are the fighting heart of the Army. Other branches exist only to support them. The Combat Soldier today has the finest equipment and transport ever devised—but he is also top-notch *as a man.* Courageous. Strong and hard physically. Alert. Intelligent.

If you're that kind of man, you'll find a welcome—and real comradeship—in the Combat Forces. It's a good life today, with high pay and training in many valuable skills and trades. If you're between 18 and 34 (17 with parents' consent) and above average physically and mentally, ask about the Combat Forces.

U. S. Army and U. S. Air Force Recruiting Service

CAREERS WITH A FUTURE

U. S. Army and U. S. Air Force

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fantastic ADVENTURES

JUNE 1948

Trade Mark Registered U. S. Patent Office, No. 373844

All Features Complete

THE EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK
By The Editor 6

THE GREATEST FANTASY
By Charles Recour 101

ARAUCANIAN MYTH
By H. R. Stanton 111

THE GIFT OF THE NILE
By Carter T. Wainwright 111

SUPERSOUND PUT TO WORK
By Frances Yerxa 124

MARINE DEITIES
By L. A. Burt 125

FIRE STONES
By Jon Barry 125

ELEMENTAL SPIRITS
By Sandy Miller 149

JEWELED COBRA
By Pete Bogg 149

FIRE BOMBS
By J. R. Marks 149

BUGS FROM PERU
By June Lurie 157

THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS ILLUSION
By Vincent H. Gaddis 158

EGYPTIAN BELIEFS
By Fran Ferris 160

FANTASTIC FACTS
By Lee Owens 162

READER'S PAGE
By The Readers 172

Front cover painting by Robert Gibson Jones, illustrating a scene from "The Black Arrow."

WILLIAM B. ZIFF
Chairman of the Board and Publisher

B. G. DAVIS
President

Vice Presidents

GEORGE BERNER
Sales and Advertising Director

MICHAEL H. FROELICH
Editorial Director

H. J. MORGANROTH
Production Director

H. G. STRONG
Circulation Director

Secretary-Treasurer
A. T. PULLEN

Art Director
HERMAN R. BOLLIN

Editor
RAYMOND A. PALMER

Managing Editor
WILLIAM L. HAMLING

Associate Editor
HENRY A. BOTT

Art Editor
MALCOLM SMITH

Published monthly by ZIFF-DAVIS PUBLISHING COMPANY at 185 North Wabash Ave., Chicago 1, Ill. New York Office, Empire State Building, New York 1, N. Y. Entered as second-class matter, July 9th, 1947, at the Post Office, Chicago, Illinois, under the Act of March 3, 1879. In U. S., Canada, Mexico, South and Central America and U. S. Possessions, $2.50 for twelve issues; in British Empire, $3.50; all other foreign countries, $3.50 for twelve issues. Subscribers should allow at least two weeks for change of address. All communications about subscriptions should be addressed to the Director of Circulation, Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, 185 North Wabash Ave., Chicago 1, Ill.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

VOLUME 10 NUMBER 6

All Stories Complete

THE BLACK ARROW (Novel—50,000)..... by Jamieson Wood..... 8

Illustrated by Robert Gibson Jones

Indian history is filled with strange customs and beliefs—like the black arrow . . .

THE TAVERN KNIGHT (Short—4,000)..... by S. M. Tenneshaw..... 102

Illustrated by William A. Gray

Felix Murphy had always been a meek little man—until he met the dragon, that is . . .

SHADOW FOR SALE (Short—6,000)..... by Chester S. Geier..... 112

Illustrated by Virgil Finlay

When Doreen walked she cast a shadow behind her—but the shadow didn't belong to *her*. . .

I WAKE UP DREAMING (Short—6,000)..... by Frances Yerxa..... 126

Illustrated by William A. Gray

When you dream at night you don't expect to wake up and find the dream a reality! . . .

THE OMINOUS BEQUEST (Short—4,500)..... by Warren Kastel..... 140

Illustrated by Julian Krupa

Cyril had the Earth, but wanted the Moon—so an angel fixed things up for him . . .

THE TIDES OF TIME (Short—3,500)..... by A. Bertram Chandler..... 150

Illustrated by William A. Gray

Time, according to Einstein, is relative—so eternity may not be as long as you think! . . .

Copyright 1948, ZIFF-DAVIS PUBLISHING COMPANY
Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations

We do not accept responsibility for the return of unsolicited manuscripts or artwork. To facilitate handling, the author should enclose a self-addressed envelope with the requisite postage attached, and artists should enclose or forward return postage. Accepted material is subject to whatever revision is necessary to meet requirements. Payment covers all authors', contributor's and contestants' magazine rights in the U.S.A. and all other countries in the article and/or illustrations and for publicity and promotion in connection therewith and will be made at our current rates upon acceptance. All photos and drawings will be considered as part of material purchased. The names of all characters that are used in short stories, serials and semi-fiction articles that deal with types are fictitious. Use of a name that is the same as that of any living person is coincidental.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Editor's Notebook

A CONFIDENTIAL CHAT WITH THE EDITOR

THE lead story this month is by a new writer, Jamieson Wood. (Maybe you've noticed the great number of new writers we've been turning up in the past few months! We're always on the lookout for new stories and new talent—and they go hand in hand—so we're presenting Mr. Wood as our latest "find.") The story, "The Black Arrow," is about as good a fantasy as you've ever read, we'll bet. (There, we're on the spot now, so read the yarn and let us know pronto!) The story is something off the beaten path, as fantasy stories, and especially novels, go. It is primarily an Indian tale, with all the lovable folklore of the redman's world—his dreams, customs, and superstitions. You'll meet among other characters, a talking rabbit. Maybe you think this sounds a bit fairy-taleish—but you're wrong. Anyway, we don't want to spoil the novel for you by saying anything more about it. You can take it up from here. . . .

WE CAN'T forget our ace cover artist, Bob Jones, who not only painted the cover around a scene from "The Black Arrow," but also did all the interior illustrations for the story. We're kind of running out of ways to say that we think Bob Jones is not only one of the best artists in the business, but *the* best in the fantasy field, so we won't even try anymore. (Hah!)

"But Professor Palmer—this one is wrapped with scotch tape!"

S. M. TENNESHAW is back again. Remember his "Come Along With Me"? Well, this time he has penned a neat little fantasy entitled, "The Tavern Knight." The story is all about a meek little man who is afraid of even his own shadow—and especially his shadow, until one day he comes face to face with a dragon—and in a tavern of all places. Well, St. George, not being around at the time, he—but there we go again, letting our enthusiasm almost give the story away. Go ahead, start reading on page 102.

EVER popular Chester S. Geier is with us too this month. You know, Chet is one of the finest writers in the fantasy field today, and we'd also like to say here that he does some mighty nice western fiction in our companion magazine, MAMMOTH WESTERN, for all you FA fans who like western stories too. Anyway, this month Chet brings you a story with a few shudders. After you read "Shadow For Sale" we'll bet you'll look over your shoulder more than once! . . .

REMEMBER Leroy Yerxa? Well, when Leroy passed away we thought we had lost a mighty fine writer—and we did. But his wife, Frances, has proven that she too can turn out a good fantasy story. For proof we offer "I Wake Up Dreaming" in this month's issue. It's a story that Leroy himself would have been proud to have written, and all we've got to say, Frances, is, keep writing!

YOU'VE seen the name of Warren Kastel in many of the Ziff-Davis fiction magazines. He started off writing top-notch detective and mystery stories, and has since turned his hand to fantasy writing. He brings us a short story this month, entitled: "The Ominous Bequest." This is the tale of a man who, literally, given the earth, asked for the moon. . . Well, with the aid of an obliging, if somewhat peculiar, angel, he got it—the moon, that is. But then—o.k. we've told you enough.

FINISHING up this month is A Bertram Chandler, a writer you have seen in other stf magazines, and now in FA. This is as it should be—you always save the best until last! Anyway, you'll enjoy his short yarn, "The Tides Of Time." . . . So we'll be seeing you next month....WLH

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

To People Who Want to Write *but can't get started*

Do you have the constant urge to write but the fear that a beginner hasn't a chance? Then listen to what the former editor of *Liberty* said on this subject:

"There is more room for newcomers in the writing field today than ever before. Some of the greatest of writing men and women have passed from the scene in recent years. Who will be the new Robert W. Chambers, Edgar Wallace, Rudyard Kipling? Fame, riches and the happiness of achievement await the new men and women of power."

Wins Writing Success Though Crippled with Arthritis

"When I became almost crippled with arthritis, N.I.A. training proved its value. I began acting as local correspondent for two papers. Then, I started a publication of my own. 'The Beekeeper' became a reality and a success. Were I physically able, I would crawl to the top of the house and shout the merits of the N.I.A. Training."—Elmer Carroll, Route 3, Box 540, Lansing, Mich.

•

Sells 78 Articles as Result of N.I.A. Training

"Before enrolling in N.I.A., I had never written a single line for publication. Since taking the course, I have sold 78 articles. I have several regular markets for all the material I have time to write. Two fiction stories are in the making and will go to the Mirror (N. Y.) and Country Gentleman. All credit goes to N.I.A.'s competent training."—Susan L. Brown, R.D. 1, Walden, N. Y.

Writing Aptitude Test — FREE!

THE Newspaper Institute of America offers a FREE Writing Aptitude Test. Its object is to discover new recruits for the army of men and women who add to their income by fiction and article writing.

The Writing Aptitude Test is a simple but expert analysis of your latent ability, your powers of observation, imagination, dramatic instinct, etc. Not all applicants pass this test. Those who do are qualified to take the famous N.I.A. course based on the *practical* training given by big metropolitan dailies.

This is the New York Copy Desk Method which teaches you to write by writing! You develop your *individual* style instead of trying to copy that of others. Although you work at home, on your own time, you are constantly guided by experienced writers. You "cover" actual assignments such as metropolitan reporters get.

It is really fascinating work. Each week you see new progress. In a matter of months you can acquire the coveted "professional" touch. Then you're ready for market with greatly improved chances of making sales.

Mail the Coupon Now

But the first step is to take the Writing Aptitude Test. It requires but a few minutes and costs nothing. So mail the coupon now! Make the first move towards the most enjoyable and profitable occupation—writing for publication! Newspaper Institute of America, 1 Park Ave., New York 16, N. Y. (Founded 1925)

VETERANS: This course approved for Veterans' Training

Free

NEWSPAPER INSTITUTE OF AMERICA
ONE PARK AVE., NEW YORK 16, N. Y.
Send me, without cost or obligation, your Writing Aptitude Test and further information about writing for profit.

Mrs. }
Miss } .....
Mr. }

Address .....

( ) Check here if you are eligible under the G.I. Bill of Rights.
(All correspondence confidential. No salesman will call on you.) 63-H-668

Copyright 1948 Newspaper Institute of America

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Black Arrow

by Jamieson Wood

FAITH UNIVERSITY was in dire need of a mental housecleaning. Professor Bertram, able psychologist, psychiatrist, psychoanalyst, master of all things woozy, was too close to the hub of wisdom to get the proper slant. Doctor Freud was not available. Beanpole Bevan was. In mentality, he crept. In stature, he soared. In reach, his wing-spread matched a bomber. Destiny highly appraised these basketball assets and chose them as means to an end.

Less than an hour past, Beanpole's long basket, squarely sunk, pulled the cork on long repressed emotions. The students, the Faculty and the Board of Trustees were not accustomed to a win-

The members of the tribe watched the two warriors battle desperately, and their lusty shouts filled the air . . .

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It all began at a basketball game, but no one could know that it would end ten thousand years in the past among a race of Indians Time has forgotten . . . !

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ning team of any kind. That is why a bonfire on the campus, blazed high, wide, and handsome. And that is why a goggle-eyed beastie weaved around it, stomped, blared and shrieked from mouth to tip of tail. A dragon centipede made of people, male and female, about fifty-fifty, a few this side and many just t'other side of adolescence, and all steamed up fit to bust.

Three flash bulbs blinked in quick succession. Prior even to the dragon's birth, the members of the Board sniffed publicity in Bevan's deed. The Peopleston Courier could pigeon glad tidings to the world without. Yes, a full-page spread would lap lucratively along the shores of illiteracy where interest in old Faith gasped for breath.

Degerry, "U studio" news photog', pro tem, worked under great pressure. Five board members kibitzed—each differently — each suggestion pressed cornfully on Deggie's nerves. They parted. A feminine ear heard 'em snap.

"I'm telling you, Ma'm, I can't took no more. Got no more bulbs. Only had three. Got the dragon's head. That'll show megaphone Malley working the flash lights and Beanpole and the rest of the team ridin' on the fellers shoulders, that's important! And I've took the thousand-legger's middle—the fire off to one side 'll show the co-eds purty nice. They're shor important.

"And I've took the tail end of the wiggler, Splice 'em Presto! There's your dragon! But," Degerry added ruefully, "I'm a feared Ma'm, Hardy Junior's mug woon't show amongst those present—my camery is self-respectin'."

"A. Hardy Stoneere Junior paid you for a *good* picture, didn't he?" snapped the Madame.

"Shor did! And—that's what I call *good*." Degerry sauntered off, head high. The Madame sauntered off, nose higher.

Healthy fires have a fuel habit. Easy reach trash was gone. The dearth threatened all things combustible, loose and unguarded, not too distant. There were such things in Peopleston. Peopleston was not too far. By custom decreed, its stable citizens retired before ten. Those less stable, if about, were usually not cognizant of their surroundings. Junior knew this and Junior had an idea. To embody his fuel concept in physical entities of size, should revitalize a 'glittering' prestige. So—Junior streaked for town. With him rode classmates three, each lacking courage not to. Mammoth and Pinhead slumped in the back seat, Shorty with Junior, at the wheel. Mammoth's massiveness assured adequate gravitational glue for the rear wheels.

Junior chose to speak:

"Remember, marble heads, anything goes that burns, provided—it makes a whale of a blaze!" Thoughtlessly he hummed, "That will be glory, yes glory for me."

"Sure! Sure!" Pinhead acknowledged loudly, whispering an aside to Mammoth.

"Sure! Sure! Big lugs always do things in a *big* way and they do it wits music!"

"Baloney! Pasty face don't lug. That's why we're here. His brain anchors him so close to the mud he'd desecrate the Lord's Prayer."

"Prize saps we were, taking his handouts for doughnuts. They were nothing but bull rings."

"Words of great wisdom!"

"Wisdom, heck! Pain in the snoot. He jerks the brass—we move!"

At the town's thin edge, Junior swung his darkened car into the shadows. The three male calves promptly returned with a garden gate and a dog house, each in value—trash, each in sentiment—treasure.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

It was easy to tie the gate along the running board but the earthly home of a beloved canine was cause for pause. The little bulls perspired in tossing it atop the car for a one-way ride. Junior's assistance comprised a chain of unseemly remarks.

With two choice slabs of bacon in the bag, the "brain" swelled:

"Now for old Nick N. Shearem's candy stick! Make it snappy!"

PINHEAD shuffled off snaplessly Mammoth bucked. "Nothing doing, Stony! Old Jef needs all he owns. Four mows are on his cuff for me now. The dead beet clips from the whole 'U' would stuff a mattress. That pole flags down the only sure cash in his piggy bank. So—nothing doing and that's that!"

"Pipe down, you hippo! Get this," Hardy snarled, "When I toss lettuce to bone-heads, I'm paying for service. Furthermore, don't forget our honor system. Now—just suppose the Madam learned how two little marbleheads skidded through the last finals on timely tips from me."

The thought was not refreshing. If she *did* learn, it would be fatal, but not for big hearted Junior. From Freshman to current Senior year it was *his* apple which invariably offered top eye-appeal. Mammoth and Pinhead saw no way out and stepped from under the Dyonesian sword and along the way to J. Jones' Tonsorial Palace. Shorty's thoughts were hardly fraternal,—"Some day I'll sponge my slate with that big crocodile. Then—an irresistible force will meet an immovable object. And if his chin don't budge, the rest of him will have to come back later."

The fuel rustlers found the palace dark. Excepting on Saturdays, the old veteran retired early to a box-like rear room called 'home'!

The objective in front of the shop was no ordinary traditional reminder of out-moded surgical skill once vested within the province of a barber. To Jef it was something exquisitely finer—this square hand-hewn sill from a pioneer home refashioned by Jef himself, meant something. Red and white stripes ran vertically, each as straight and clean as the shaft itself. A navy blue crown banded by thirteen facets carried a white star in each, while a gilded eagle finialed the apex.

Jef's oldest transient customer. Harry Davison travelling for Lifelong Hardware, had been told the purport of it.

"Thems are the colors of Old Glory and I aims to have 'em right! Ye see I have a lot o' young fellers tradin' with me. Now when I figger one is off-shade on his loyalty, I turns the chair aroun' so he has to look plum at that pole. Then, I dizzertate on peoples—ways to live—ways not to—on bad governments—good governments—and no governments at all—and of course, what the red, white and blue of our flag really means. So-o-o—all the while he sits thar gettin' his both eyes socked with the right colors and his ears boxed with the right doctern'. Then when I gets to askin' "Wet'r dry? You can bet your bottom dollar that young sprout clims down with his hair smooth and the kinks combed out of his twisted interlect! Yes sir, I do a little larnin' to them as needs it on my own account.

"The 'U' is all right—mebbe?—but it shor splotters its eddicatin so much, these younguns can't see through the fog. Pears to me some of them perfessers spend their time huntin' fer all the mistakes we've made since we signed the Declaration. Then they chalk 'em up on the 'black-board' and blasts 'em with the durnedest lot o'

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

furrin isms, ists and ologies. And then, when the smoke clears away—presto! —the board is sweet and clean—only 'taint. Board's *no better* for the shootin', but it's still thar,—big enough to take it and the best durned *government* in the world. And that ain't the worst those higher larnin' wreckers do.

"A lot o' these younguns ha' been rared purty right. If they didn't ha' to go to Sunday School—fearin' a whalin' if they didn't—their folks tried to larn 'em right frum wrong by settin' purty good examples theyselves. Sort of easin' the idea to 'em painless, that ther folks was bein' moved in the kind ways they did things by Somethin' bigger than they was—Somethin' they couldn't explain—only knowed IT must be!

"Waal—what happens? Why a lot o' these younguns, purty straight thinkin' fur bein' decent, go into the 'U'. Then what? Them woozy wiseacres that can't figger 'mongst theyselves what' the answer is, start shootin' with the sciences, usin' God's own tools He uses to make the unyverse tick, just to prove He ain't!

"Of course thar al'ays be outstandin' excepshuns, some worse, some better. Fer instance, mentionin' no names, thar's one smartaleck. Near as I figger it, he's a reg'lar bootlicker to them corkscrew larner's. Pays for what he gets, but seems, it just magnerfys his importance flashin' a big green roll. I low he warn't rared right even if his old man is quite inflooenshul.

"And then thar's just the opposite. A young feller standin' bout six four in his socks. Sometimes his hide seems so coppery you'd swar he war part Injun. Waal I got no haircuts on my cuff fur him neither but the way he counts his twenty-five pennies, I speckerlate they didn't gravitate into his jeans through a fire hose. Never talks about his folks. Fact is he don't talk much nohow. But he just be a doin' somethin' decent for someone all the time. The 'U' haint spoiled him. Fixed Forbe's old squawkin' gate just because it was their sparkin' place as younguns. Doctored Beverly's old blind Bozo for weeks afore he went whar good purps go. And fer me, painted that pole three times a 'ready. And all this *I know* he done fer nothin'? Goin to be a doctor? Wall mebbe, or a preacher? Could be. And nice as he is a feller there's a little peach comes in occashunally. Folks may be rich but money hain't spiled her. When she shows up for a fancy hairdo, if I'm busy I al'ays feel like sayin' 'step down please, thar's a lady waitin'. She too is al'ays doin' somebody some good. All wool charity bazaarer,—sings like a angel. All the sky pilots know it. Man! How her voice kin smack the lid on an evaporatin' congregashun! Queer how when I think of the Injun feller, I al'ays think of her. Well mister,—what'll it be wet or dry?"

THE fuel rustlers well knew Jef's sentiments and as three of them viewed the shaft's outline in the shadowy darkness, they too, saw a certain majesty in it. Again rebellion flared and was stalled with greater vigor, Junior employed his ham-sized chamois-soft palm to gag Shorty's most stubborn verbal resistance.

"I'll tape your chatter-box if necessary! There's to be no skeleton dance tonight if I have to lay the three of you cold!"

And as the pole came up and was toted noiselessly to the car, Junior expressed satisfaction in his great achievement:

"That completes *my* fuel quota for the current festivity."

The gate, lashed along the left running board, obstructed entrance there,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

so the pole was to be placed on the right, bottom end, well forward. Mammoth, alone on the front seat, would do the driving, and when all readied to go, Junior would sit between Shorty and Pinhead on the rear seat. He reserved this personal-safety detail for the moment. Well, Junior's satellites killed too much time in the lashing of the pole; so, Junior *extremely vexed,* stooped to menial labor. And so engrossed he grew, that when Hemingway's police dog, securely leashed a hundred yards away, gave a wolfish bark, square knots changed to grannies. That bark should not have fretted Junior for there was something bruin, gooseflesh close, lumbering carward, tinkling—woofing, clanking his chains and in an evil mood to do bodily harm to mischievous humans. The satellite trio instantly recognized the bruin presence. Not so, Junior, until he heard the the right rear door slam, leaving him outside with one alternative—to keep the car between himself and bruin. It was near the half-way mark of the fourth lap around, when the car shot forward under Shorty's guidance. And it was at this very moment that bruin came within cuffing distance of the western side of Junior's pants. He was not as safely ensconsed upon the rear bumper as he had supposed for suddenly he sensed an impropriety in sartorial splendor and four parallel scratches that had appeared suddenly upon his person.

Junior would have chosen an early moment to slip gracefully from the speeding vehicle but he could risk no further lacerations of his tweeds or epidermis. So while hugging the bumper with the affection of a spider monkey, he stirred a witch's brew for his satellites—thoughts bubbling with jolly concoctions of slow torture and premeditated murder.

IN THIS unholy frame, Junior unwound himself from the bumper as the car stopped near the bonfire. His appearance, untidy of course, was more than a surprise to the trio. It was a horrid apparition. The satellites needed no verbal prodding to move silently in their respective orbits in unloading the fuel treasure. Bozo's old home and Forbes' gate went to their doom on the far side of the blaze, but not the pole. Hardy sought to smooth the dimples in his dented prestige by loudly ordering its disposal at a point near by. With Mammoth leading, the pole moved flameward. His bulk lent weighty argument but his inaudible, "Gangway!" warnings weakened the heraldic grandeur of the procession. What stopped the parade was a deep masculine voice:

"Nothing doing, *Stony!* That's Jef's. Take it back!"

Junior hurried forward along the opposite side of the pole, from Cyrus Jayson.

"Why *me?*" he asked. "I haven't done anything. Say you birds—Did I bring that candy cane in?"

"No," sorrowfully answered the trio.

"Bushwah!" drawled Cyrus.

"Tell it to him, big boy!" shouted a girl holding a ring-side seat to the ruckus which had sizzled almost unnoticed. Dot Sempleton did not like Junior's ways.

"Shut your trap, you big tub!" snapped Junior, "And for you, Sawbones, if I got the pole—so what?"

"That's a laugh. Admitting I lack the details of the recent episode, yon flickering flame lends mystic enchantment,—even more—a revealing light whereby I perceive base facts!"

Junior's jaw nose-dived while both his hands instantly side-slipped and snap-rolled to the former western region of his pants. Equally surprised by Cy's disclosure of Junior's disclosure,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the trio gaped at the mystic master of the occult as he continued,—

"Now, for the *so what!* You know *well* what that pole means to Jef. Haven't you any regard for his brand of sentiment? Besides that, Jef needs it to live; he can't feed on I-O-U's!"

"Ain't that too bad?" Junior shouted, "He's ready to check out anyway. When he's dead, he's dead. So, no more lip from this Sunday school sap! Gangway!"

Shorty and Pinhead surged forward, holding fairly amidships on the same side, to balance the pole and stay clear in the final toss. The safety measure was needless. Cy gave a vigorous leap and sidewise push thus spinning the pole around. Naturally, it upset Junior physically. Mentally, he fumed. Scrambling to his feet, he made a healthy pass at Cyrus—and—missed!

Now Jason, embryo physician or not, knew the potency of a certain medicine. He was scrupulous in measuring it to the needs of the moment. The counter-irritant about the knees of Junior had reduced a painfully swollen ego but the reaction had been unfavorable. Hence Cyrus concluded that plaster applied close to the focus of infection should be given immediate trial. So, curving his right hand he plastered it over Junior's left ear with cyclonic rapidity. Although more upsetting to the patient, the cupping took immediate effect.

Dot Sempleton was visibly impressed by the gratifying impact. Later in the evenings she giggled the affair to Beatrice Melicent:

"When Cy hit that big palooka, it clapped like stacking plates at the Greasy Spoon!"

"Youch!" Bea exclaimed as Dot's hands climaxed her description.

"Oh baby! More'n youch! It was almost—'Quick! the smelling salts!'—By the way, fellow, Where were you? Has the Great Magnet lost its pull, or, have you lost the iron in your blood?"

Beatrice hesitated, her eyes looking without seeing: "Could be, pal. I doubt he's human enough to be lonesome. Guess he's just a passingly interesting study in bronze, cold, unfeeling, insensible to the deeper emotions."

"Gosh what a case."

Be that as it may, *Junior* solicited solitude—

However, he handed the keys of his car to the trio, before making himself scarce.

The satellites' assignment was not entered with enthusiasm until Cyrus offered to pilot them on his own bike as soon as the pole was ready.

"It might be safer that way," Cy said and he told them why:

That afternoon he overheard a conversation in the express office. A Professor Swartzmeister was vainly searching for a lodging for his bear 'Jo,' booked for a showing at the Peopleston Bijou. So Cy induced Jef to lease a shed back of his shop for the night. "And now" he said in conclusion, "Poor moth-eaten fuzzy is on the loose!"

WHAT the trio knew, Cy did not ask. He didn't have to. But he did have some difficulty in untangling three honest versions spouted at the same time.

Well, when Junior's car was not far from Jef's shop, Cyrus checked the pace. Soon they made out what he saw. The hole where the pole had been was hollowed to bath-tub proportions and within it a furry mound dreamed the happy hours away. Cy tossed overboard a little black box and whispered to douse the head lights, and stop. The trio thought they saw something trailing along behind Cy's bike. Then, only

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their ears could 'see' in tantilizing darkness. A few half-hearted sniffs puffed to super dupers. A tinkling of chain dwindled to a deadly silence, to be broken suddenly by Cy's whispering shadow,—"All okey doke! Let's get busy!"

Peopleston was very old. It sprawled lazily both sides of a little creek and survived the snoozy years for no known reason, except one—old Faith. This was a pest and a cow. Well-heeled folks stomped and bellowed at the exuberance of youth. Realists piped down. Their few stores were stocked to pinch-hit with everything from razor blades to bobbie pins. The University had a different method of approach. It trumpeted to the thirsy in the Desert of Illiteracy through a handsomely-embellished voluminous brochure, alluringly illustrated. The silvery clarion, however, was too sweetly low to reach more than a V-mail cross-section of ears, American.

What the modest enrollment lacked in numbers it made up in wind—a battle-royal forum of theories political, religious and scientific, getting nowhere.

The p s e u d o - intellectual cyclone found expression in the puzzling personality of one Abigail Mardigras, A.B.; Ph.D.; Pd.D. To the students, she was 'The Madam,'—why so tagged, nobody knew. The monicker seemed a tailor-made fit, so nobody suggested alterations. At close range, she was an ice cube (dry ice), but distance did tricks. Middle years, bilious features and sombre costume melted gracefully into an attractive widowy composition.

Professionally, the Madam occupied unique, and, all-powerful positions;—As Dean of Women—an executive of steel, machine of precision—tolerance plus zero minus zero. Stringent rules made the women's dormitory safe but a bleak colorless abode, bare of the 'homey atmosphere' featured by counterfeit half-tones in the brassy brochure. Not so her own office. Madras curtains softened the windows. An oriental softened the floor. Period furniture eased the eye—not the person. And an endless profusion of oils and ivories of gods, gargoyles and griffins, ested the visitor's reason. A few text books and a well-thumbed edition of Bulfinch—The Age of Fable, took the last breath of air in the room.

As 'Queen' of the Humanities, the 'blade of efficiency' carved out the courses; spiked all objections; pared down the credits. In studies, *mandatory,* the women got a tough break. Woe came a 'trottin' to any fair coed who failed to lap up a certain gooey mess with gusto, for, in class, the cutlass slashed with merciless force, and, in the office of the Dean, came hissing down with a haughty decisive sweep of self-created power.

Beatrice Melicent looked for the lark in his heaven. The morning was that kind as she hurried alone, earlier than usual, toward old pretentious Hub Hall. Far across the campus a black unsightly heap still smouldered and steamed from a final midnight hosing. Ugly as it was, it reminded her of an evening worth remembering, not for any romantic nonsense—the study in bronze saw with eyes that saw not—was, therefore, just a waste of makeup.

The sky was gloriously blue, the world softly green, the air so buoyant, she did not notice the steps up to the doorway. She made straight for the bulletin board, not that she anticipated finding anything of importance to her, merely to obey a routine mandatory rule. But this morning she did find a scratch-pad sheet reading,—"Miss

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Beatrice Melicent will report immediately to the office of the Dean of Women. A. Mardigras."

BEA quickly removed the notice. She was glad she had been first to see the board and doubly so to find nobody else in the hall. The Madam had not attended Chapel. No doubt she was in her office, and this notice permitted no postponement. Bea proceeded at reduced speed down the corridor. She tapped gingerly, on the office door. At a muffled "Come in," she oozed through. The Madam parboiled her for fully a minute before asking her to sit down. Then reaching for an office copy of the brochure the doctor opened it with machine precision and said, in a droning monotone:

"This is to refresh your memory;—Here, under 'The Humanities'—(omitting irrelevancies) we find 'Course H-1 *Mythological Symbolism* — for female matriculants—*mandatory*. This course embraces a comprehensive survey of ancient, mediaeval and more recent priceless heritages of human fancy. Its objective is to cultivate the ability to recognize, associate and interpret emblematic configuration whenever encountered in the Fine Arts—Free or Dependent, or wherever these adorable treasures are seen or symbolized in poetry or prose.

"So vast is the subject, and so limited the time, the esthetic standards of Faith University necessitate restricting the study to mythical, legendary and other fictional, characters, of *true cultural worth*. These matchless pearls of allegory, from the romantic point of view, being of particular appeal to Woman, and a comprehensive knowledge thereof, widely interpreted, being of aid in relative evaluation of truly artistic concepts, this course is deemed of *first importance* to young women."

The Madam closed the brochure and leaned toward her target to fire at a more effective range:

"You are undoubtedly aware why you are here. I deem it incumbent upon me to supervise the welfare of each young woman and be observant of her conduct. *Your* apparent popularity with male matriculants should enhance your interest in lyric poetry, if not with mythology of the ancients, per se. Such is not the case. Your themes are juvenile. I am amazed that my colleagues allow you more than conditional grades. Your critiques of the attributes accredited to mythical beings indicate gross inattention to *my* evaluation of the cultural worth of these *priceless heritages*.

"*I demand* that these *adorable treasures* strike a responsive chord in every student in my class. I hold that neglect of my teachings is tantamount to *failure* and, not merely in *this course alone!* I trust this warning will be sufficent!"

Beatrice sat motionless, too confused to think. . . . Recovering from the initial blast, she silently evaluated her own true self. She had ranked with the upper third for nearly four years. She loved romance. It was truly the breath and heart beat of myth and legend, yet why had she found Mythological Symbolism a thrilling dodo? Was it the personality of the Madam in the classroom? No. . . . What the ??? Why, the cunning plan to the entire course, *That* was it!

Generations of Yankee steam superheated by some forebears below the Mason and Dixon line, raced through 120 pounds of dazzling Miss America; —and—the pressure grew too great:

"Dean Mardigras," she snapped springing to her feet, "You have authority to grade, D-grade, or flunk any girl you choose. You are likewise privi-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

leged to form opinions as to the cultural values of those 'priceless heritages' but you have no authority to demand acquiescence. I appreciate fully there are some 'matchless pearls' in the elaborate chain of World Art, fiction, and poetry, but that long chain of 'cultural worths' does not break abruptly at the four-mile limit!"

The Madam winced,—her lips drew taut—yet she made no answer. Beatrice drew a deep breath again.

"Has the policy of this school grown so alienated in cultural appreciation that no beauty or romance is seen in our own flower gardens! But how we're dosed with Appolo, Calliope, Clio, Erato, Shiva, Shamash, Haciman and oodles more of 'em—a virtuous and villianous messy stew poured in an endless stream ad nauseam! Is the world a blank from New Foundland to Alaska? I suppose no god or goddess, fairy, witch, ghost or dragon ever haunted a New World wilderness. Phooey! The high-brow build-up in your circus souvenir is a 'pip' for a three-ring show but the act is nothing but a lop-sided one-ring flop playing a long, long way from Home Sweet Home. I'm *mad!* And the madder I get, the more I see things you don't. *There is* beauty, poetry, prose, romance, myth and legend galore in just such 'adorable treasures' as these,—a Currier and Ives, Rip Van Winkle, Sleepy Hollow, the Raven, Romana,—and—*Hiawatha!* There's a *song* right down *your* alley! A wry smile crept over her face as Bea's temper tossed in her last chip, —"Say Doc, why don't you dish that out?"

FOR a full minute neither woman moved, neither woman spoke. The Madam's eyes closed slowly and her tense lips narrowed to two blue lines—ugly cords devoid of motion yet speaking within. Then the normal mask returned to the Madam's face and normal sub-zero temperature returned to the spoken word:

"It is indeed interesting to learn that you intimate interest in things other than cosmetic artifice and personal adornment." She hesitated. Her lips were drying. Gaining control of her nerves, she continued:

"Regardless of your infantile comprehension of cultural worth, I must be fair. Therefore, speaking in the vulgarities of the street with which you are distressingly familiar, *you have asked for it,* and—*you are going to get it!*

"Acting upon your inference, I direct you to prepare a ten thousand word theme which shall treat of the mythology of the Red Races. Properly prepared, it will require no little research. The interior of the library will helpfully turn your attention from the gymnasium, amateur dramatics and popularity contests. I *warn* you, your final and deciding grade will rest upon the *informative* perfection of this thesis. The subject matter is of no cultural value.

"It will prove woefully drab, wholly lacking the sparkle, gaiety, buoyance, life and romance which has so brilliantly illuminated my classroom. It will be dry leaves, long dead, crumbling unto dust. Miss Melicent, you are excused."

Sentence was *passed,* not suspended, Bea thought as she drifted through a foggy door. Absolute failure stared at her from everything. Even a handsome rug just outside the Madam's door, shrieked as the Sun's rays sharpened its black-white striping. Let the gong ring! Classes weren't for her. Bea started toward a little-used side exit. She hoped she might even reach her room unnoticed.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

She had taken no more than a step or two when the sound of a window opening and closing seemed to come from the Madam's office. But Bea was too concerned to be curious. She hurried outside. *There* she could not hear the house phone ring in Professor Bertram's office. Yet it did a few minutes later. The switchboard operator had a request to relay to him.

"This is the operator, Professor Bertram. Will you be available to conduct the 10:30 class in Mythological Symbolism, this morning? Doctor Mardigras is indisposed. This is her request."

With near automatism, Beatrice stooped, picked up a tiny trinket and rolled it in her handkerchief—"Poor Mother and Dad" was her all-absorbing thought. Classes were in session, and so few out of doors were within hearing, that a heavy step approaching, attracted her attention.

It was Junior on his way from the school's garage, heading for Doctor Hargrave's laboratory. Junior was one person, she didn't care to meet. An invulnerable friendship between the Madam and the Stoneeres was common knowledge. But curiosity took momentary possession as Beatrice looked closer. Under his left arm Junior carried two cumbersome books. From the hand of his right there dangled a large white rabbit gripped by his long pink ears. It kicked frantically. He was really in no mood to be bothered.

"Quit you darn albino mule!" he yelled, "Snicker Snee VII 'll cut the kick out o' you. The more pronto, the better." Beatrice waved a 'poker-face' hello. Junior didn't return it. He didn't have time—or inclination. A gust of wind toyed with his hat. His right hand shot upward to grasp it. Later on, Bea could not swear whether it was on the way up or down that the rabbit kicked Junior in the face. The result mattered, not the precise instant, when the rabbit made its get away. As the animal bobbed along in a kangarooish frenzy, he apparently saw many inviting dark recesses in the black steamy debris of the bonfire. There seemed no other sanctuary in a vast expanse of early spring lawn.

"I hope you roast," Junior shouted as he wiped the kick from his face.

Despondent as she was, this was too much. Bea laughed. Junior scowled. "That goes for other dumb bunnies too," adding, "To please the Doc I hauled that beast all the way from the express office. Crate was too heavy. I left it in the garage. Thought I'd stand in Jake, but I'll spin a smooth yarn."

Bea's face had sobered, "You better hurry or be late for your 'story hour.' "

"Cut the shooting," Junior snapped, "You may be needing a *friend* some day. A friend in need is—very expensive, my Cutie."

BEATRICE was a deep dark blue as she walked on, —that invulnerable friendship between the Stoneeres and the Madam—the plight of the rabbit.

As she neared the dormitory entrance, Cyrus Jason rounded into the grounds. He roomed in town. A bicycle was his means of transportation. Spotting Beatrice he shouted, "Hie Lady! Why homeward so early?"

"O, I'm a mush I guess," she said as Cyrus stopped.

"What's it all about, you look down?"

Bea stalled. She pressed the rabbit incident as the reason for the spell of the blues. In conclusion she said, "You know when I was a kid I always wanted a white rabbit just like that poor little dickens. I've never out grown it. And there he is—escaped dissection by a wiggle and now must

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

starve or roast to death!"

Cyrus looked at her searchingly, "I'm sorry for bunny myself but that tale is too short even for a rabbit. What's the matter with you?"

Beatrice swayed dizzily. Cyrus reached out his hand. "Steady! Little Girl." He urged her around to the little-used side door where they could park on the steps.

Beatrice tried being steady. Her lips quivered and the dam gave away! Cy's sympathies fell first, then,—his heart.

She was no longer just a fine girl with a voice that did queer things to him; no longer Miss Melicent. She was his own Saint Beatrice, canonized by Cupid, an angel in heaven, yet as near as the life in his heart. He was strong, but not strong enough to tell her so. Likewise he groped for words, "Bea" he stammered—"I—I—I wish you'd tell me what's gone haywire. Maybe I can help you."

Bea hesitated, yielding, when a hysterical stutter was well wound up, "Well if you mu-mu-must k-k-know. I-I-I'm in the dog-dog-house."

"It hasn't any door."

"But the Madam chained me up," she persisted.

"I'll sniff and snap the weakest link. Please give me the low-down Bea?"

She did. And he promised to keep it under his hat. That promise, he knew, would never be broken.

She told the whole story, finally voicing utter dejection:

"She has me Cy, I'm sunk and she knows it," her emotions welled again. Cyrus wanted to put his arm around her, yet a chap without a single tangible prospect, had no right. He could be no more than a real friend in need. When Beatrice had calmed enough to listen he said, "I've been thinking. You know, there's something phony about that course. I have a hunch the Madam has been carting around a symbol of something for so long a time its old enough to be a legend but you can bet your life it isn't any myth."

Beatrice looked at him curiously. She said slowly, "Somehow your hunch clicks perfectly with her dreamy remark, 'It will be dry leaves, long dead, crumbling unto dust.' "

"Sure does. Men don't have to take that crazy course but I'm a trifle observing. A long time ago I noticed a tiny arrow-head pinned on the Madam's dress right over her heart. It was a peach. Since then I don't recall ever seeing her without it, and always sort of 'on the bias' as you might say. Now I opine this Mythological Symbolism is a sort a' sealed tomb holding not a trace of that which she once adored—a fire burning to the god of Hatred to damn a cherished memory. That *point* is a hair-shirt torture she endures to keep the fire burning. She seals this fetish in, by sealing it out—queer complex, isn't it? You see what I am driving at."

Beatrice nodded. "Yes, I *am* beginning to see. Why the gewgaws in her office reflect what you have figured out. And do you know Cy, that rough swastika Navaho rug just outside her office door gives her a chance to tramp on it going and coming. More hate."

"Fits the whole picture doesn't it. Say, little One, (pardon me Beatrice) which way does the swastika whirl?"

"To the left. I stood and gawped at it long enough waiting to get in."

"Are you sure the rug isn't upside down?"

"How dumb I am. No wonder it looked rough. What a crazy idea."

"Well I'd call it a compound complex. Walking on the rug face up—that's vengence of clabbered love. But wrong side up, that's *hate*. With no punches pulled. Yet it all adds up to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the . . ."

"Yes," Beatrice broke in nervously. "It all adds up to the fact that my crazy temper hit the bulls-eye when it ran berserk. And it gave the Madam a chance to take it out on me. And there's nothing I c-c-c-can d-d-do about it!" Again she wiped away the tears with the soggy wadded wisp. A fine red line trailed the stroke of her hand. Cyrus was tortured again with an insane (or, may be *sane*) impulse to draw her close to him. But, heavens—this was no place—a gold fish globe in broad day light. Capsized in her tears his eyes searched hopefully across the soft carpet of the campus. An early robin was pulling for his breakfast. "Look there" he exclaimed, "I've never seen one of those chaps cut up his wiggling meat very neatly and then eat bit by bit. That's etiquette!"

Cyrus glanced at Beatrice, hopeful of results. One look was enough, "Bea" he cried, "You have scratched your cheek, you are bleeding. Don't you feel it?"

SHE dabbed at her face and did feel a prickle through the linen. Quickly she opened her handkerchief, and both of them stared wide eyed! Beatrice was dumbfounded, Cyrus managed to say, "That's the *Point!* It's black Obsidian, where *did* you get it? Been holding back on me, eh?"

Bea swallowed hard, "Holding back, my foot! I didn't even feel it. Lucky I didn't scratch my eyes out with it. I picked that up on the walk on my way over here but I have been so upset I forgot it and didn't even notice what it was. I guess I picked it up about opposite the Madam's window."

"You *are* lucky! This all fits into the picture. She took the beating of her life this morning and she sensed you had a toe hold on her riddle so she couldn't risk the wearing of the point another moment."

"And so, she tossed it out the window."

"Right! You're a wizard!" Cy enthused, "Well I figure it's yours. 'Losers—Finders—Keepers.' I bet you could wear it right over your heart and she would never let on she saw it."

Beatrice hoped inwardly that there would be no occasion for that—never!

To be sure that the point had not been lost, they again examined it. The pin-lock was perfect. It was backed with gold, this bright, indicating recent wearing. The pin was closed when found. Then Beatrice recalled another oddity about the Madam—she always wore black or some subdued shade. The apparel camouflaged the point. Conscience free but frowning, Beatrice attached the arrow head to the novelty bracelet on her arm where it surely would not tempt History to repeat. Feeling a little regretful she said,

"It'll do no good for me to go to the Madam and tell her I'm sorry."

"That's so. At least she must respect you now, but you would lose it that way. The only thing is to go through. How about meeting me in the library tonight around seven. We'll give some musty old books a good massage and gather up a basket full of notes. That'll be a good start. The rest will be easy. What say?"

Beatrice lacked the courage to say what she thought. "You're a great big darling!" She dissolved this in lukewarm oral skim milk.

"I'll appreciate a little coaching."

"Okeydoke! Now I got to get going. Dr. Hargrave wants my slant as a student on our pre-medic' course. I've dabbled a little with it you know. But remember I'll be seeing you around 7. Don't keep me waiting. A broken date annoys me. O!, before I go, I antici-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pate we'll break out within twenty-four hours with bad attacks of 'Rubraderma Mythogotis' so I prescribe two tickets to the Flicker Scratch tomorrow evening. Prof. Schwartzmeister you know is booked with a trained bear between the double features. What say?"

GIGGLING nervously over the Red skin Myth-disease she looked up at him smiling and said, "Don't keep me waiting. A broken date annoys me."

Cyrus did not confer with Dr. Hargrave. He had a more important furry matter on his mind. When Beatrice was safely out of sight he headed for the kitchen where Maggie operated this filling station.

Said she, "You're a queer sort of guy tip-toein' in every little while wid your fingers on your lips and givin' me that moth-eaten gag 'this is our secret' and never tellin' me what you be doin' with what you gets. Lasht evenin', a comb of honey. Nary a bit of it you ate. Now 'tis juicy carrots with whiskers on you do be wantin'. Here they are. God love ye'! You spalpeen. Such secrets are not worth tellin'."

With these, an empty soap box and a few sticks, Cyrus headed for the charred heap across the campus.

As Jason tip-toed his exit through the door, Mammoth sought sustenance through another,

"Hello Maggie Old Palsie Walsie," he said, "Please just a few breakfast crumbs to tide me along. I feel weak."

"You're always wake! You should be. Wid carrin' your mornin' vittels, you should be trembling like an overloaded grocery wagon with its rear axil sprung. You'll ate us out of house and home. But better we take the chance of bein' evicted than you die on your fate. Here you are me b'y. But don't pull up that chair you spalpeen. Two legs you broke already and Jason was a fixin' of em two hours. Just break another so I'll have good strong ones if you live long enough atin' yourself to death."

Between gulps and gobbles Mammoth mumbled incoherently, "You—my lifesaver! I—move —, I breathe, I am a living thing—again."

"You are? Well, if you are livin', you're no air-plant like Jason. He don't ate nothing. Lasht avenin' afore supper he bartered wid me for honey which he didn't ate. This mornin', tis' carrots which he don't ate. But he aint wake from fastin'."

Mammoth nearly choked between gulps. "You say he got the honey before supper?"

"Yes afore' supper and the big jamboree. And twas no dude honey in a bottle. It was in a box, chewin' gum and all, like be-as mak' it."

"I got it" shouted Mammoth.

"Hevins, did you ate that too?"

"I did not but I know who did and it was'nt Cy. Thanks for the fuel. Charge it."

..."*Charge it.* Bejabers, Tis time I stuck up a sign Vegtable Mortishun, for—DEAD BEETS. Go long wid you now. You have me grub. Now you be takin' me time. Shoo!"

Mammoth had news. The source was his to keep. Shorty and Pinhead had ears to listen to what he chose to tell them.

"So Cy baited the bear with honey," remarked Shorty. "But why, Most High Scoop, did he get it before supper?"

"You dumb egg, old Cy had planned to feed it to him anyway. He *is* a right guy!"

BEATRICE in entering her own room found a Special Delivery letter left under the door by the matron. It was from her mother. It was lengthy

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and sobbed as follows:

At Home.

My Dear Dear Daughter:

Mother hardly knows how to begin to tell you what circumstances compel me to. Daddy and I are nearly frantic and if there were time, we would have you come home and then explain everything. But we know you are a strong little girl with a lot of common sense and will do your best to help us in this difficult position. We feel confident that what we have tried to do for our little girl, all these years, she appreciates deeply.—As much as I hate to tell you many things—I must. Some that I may mention, you may already know. But to make our position perfectly clear, I'll tell you everything. And this was what the letter told:

When Beatrice was a baby, the Melicents and Stoneeres were neighbors. Once when Junior was taken so ill he needed special attention, the Melicents took care of him in their home, as the Stoneeres' income was meagre. Later, the families drifted apart. The Stoneeres prospered. The Melicents' finances remained unchanged. Why this occurred was learned from a Mr. Revere, a broker in sound securities. But Melicent would not have learned this, had Stoneeres not rejected a more recent security offering. Feeling that Stoneere's confidence was lost, Revere submitted the proposition to Melicent. He accepted it. Through this the Melicents prospered. Revere, having vindicated his judgment, teased Stoneere about it. Enraged, he accused Revere of insincerity. The bitterness lasted. At first the Melicents were amused but rumors sprouted that Melicent and Revere had swindled Stoneere out of a mine. Revere was abroad then, on an extended journey and the Melicents, embarrassed called on their old friends. They ardently denied initiating the rumor and casually wondered why Revere had left so suddenly.

However the damage was done. Business acquaintances doubted Melicent. To refer them to Stoneere would admit embarrassment. Revere's whereabouts was not definitely known, so gossip spread, even invading social affairs. Again the Melicents visited the Stoneeres. It was just after Junior was home for a week-end visit. So frantic was Melicent, he offered to sell the investment at cost. The Stoneeres gushingly refused, she even expressing a hope that Beatrice would become interested in Junior for he had mentioned her frequently. To further the matter, Mrs. Stoneere had arranged an exclusive social function for the following Saturday evening; had written Junior to invite Beatrice in person. The Melicents could see no way of refusing and in closing her letter. Mrs. Melicent wrote: "You, my dear, can help us so in being very nice to Junior. Daddy and I have always wanted you to choose for yourself in selecting a life partner, but with the turn that things have taken we so hope Junior's affection for you will be reciprocal! It means so much! We can not believe the Staoneeres are insincere and we would be broken hearted should you feel you were being sacrificed against your heart's desire. We would rather die in penniless disgrace than have you hurt.

Your loving, and confused,

Mother.

BEATRICE thrust the letter in her blouse, and her sobbing face in her pillow. Fate had toyed cruelly with her in less than two hours. A happy girl had suffered the threat of failure. True love had lifted her heart to the zenith of hope and unforeseen circumstances had dashed it to bits on her own abounding filial affection! Dear Cy was ordained to live in one world, she in another, as

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

far apart as heaven from earth. She, too, was doomed to wear obsidian over her heart in years to come.

At the noon hour, Dot Sempleton breezed into their room and found Beatrice dazed, if not half insane. Dot's eyes saucered, "What in the world is the matter with you?" she exclaimed, "You are as red as a beet, you've got a fever! Where is our thermometer? Your eyes are swelled to pop! Got the flue? Shall I call a Doctor? Maybe there is an epidemic! You skipped Myth Sym this morning. So did the Madam. 'Pop' Bertram took over and what an old dear he is."

Beatrice mumbled. Dot caught the words "live" or "die" and guessed the rest. "Praise be, so 'tisn't a fever. Come on Pal just spill the whole works. It will relieve that stuffed up feeling!" The room spun as Beatrice searched for words. Some things she could tell,—her set-to with the Madam—the rabbit incident—Cy's proffered assistance—the movie date. And there were things she could not tell. Her mother's letter was a family affair. Finding the black obsidian was her secret, Cy's secret; he had touched it with his hands—it was priceless! Dot listened intently to what she told, noticing all the while, a strange wholly unnatural dreamy indifference. Dot pitied her but didn't dare to,—"Well if you aren't lucky! There was a Bea in our school and she was wondrous wise; she yumped into a bramble bush—and near' scratched out both her eyes; and when *he* thought her eyes were out, with all his might and brain, along came Cyrus Jason, to scratch 'em in again. How do you do these things." You'll land the A.B. and a C.Y. too, or my name isn't Featherweight Flossie."

Bea merely replied, "You're the best pal in the world, but you don't understand. It isn't any use." Dot didn't understand. *That* worried her. She persisted in her own silly way.

"You better stick your finger down your throat!" That suggestion failed. She pondered desperately. She started on a new tack. She resorted to a fairy tale form in the telling with the hope to both interest and irritate her pal, as a way of relief from this strange mood. What she told was important . . . not how she told it. (Dot had overheard a conversation many years before between Mrs. Stoneere and Dot's own mother, during a social call.)

It started 'Once upon a time' . . . and went on to give Beatrice food for thought. It was a story of a horrid dragon and a winsome Miss. The Miss was named Abigail, but she didn't know the dragon's name. Nevertheless it was tall, dark and handsome. How the Miss met the dragon nobody knew. He didn't ride a white charger as a Prince Charming should; he worked nearly every day digging up old bones and chinaware. Abigail fell so heavy for the big bone rustler she grew equally interested in his work. She had inherited a little money and trailed around with the dragon, digging and sorting and writing. She, having no real home, and he, no castle, their abodes were under their hats, parked in the same lot at a respectable distance apart. Then came our entry into the First World War. Prince Charming grew restless, they quarreled over nothing and he volunteered, Abigail received just one letter from somewhere in France. And then, unlike the usual fairy tale 'thirty'—they didn't live happy ever after, for, Abigail heard no more.

Dot's colorful account impressed her roommate. All Beatrice could say was "So *there are* the dry leaves long dead. Dot you are a swell pal but please go on and let me alone. Don't stew about me, I'll make a stab at that darn theme

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and go down with my boots on if I have to." It was a good bluff. Dot kissed Beatrice and hurried off with mascara, rouge and lipstick landing hit or miss as she made for the first afternoon class.

BEATRICE, alone, felt herself ossifying into a cold unfeeling machine—a second Madam. There was a schedule to be met.—A letter to her mother. It would be precise, dispassionate, and tinted with a superficial display of concern over her parents unhappy position. It would express an intent to comply with her mother's wishes. It would be affectionately cordial without over-emphasis. The steam in her veins of that morning was congealed to crystals of ice. With the letter completed she would get a cup of tea. Only Maggie would be present. She never minded being imposed upon. She would return to her room. Watch for Junior. She would walk outside and with nonchalance, cross his path. This would be in conformity with her mother's wishes. She would return to her room, feign a splitting headache, thereby satisfy Dot's anticipations. Later as per agreement, she would keep the library appointment promptly. Accept the aid, thank Cyrus courteously, casually break the date for the following evening and then return to her room —all—just like that!

The female machine clicked perfectly, according to plan until the crossing of paths with Junior, then, 'it' jammed! "Hello again!" was the best 'it' could do in tackling defective 'material,' having a noticeably swollen ear. Ah! here was something worth working on! "Why Hardy," exclaimed the machine, "How come?"

Junior, surprised, crawled neatly through the cat-hole with a characteristic tailor-made lie:

"Tripped in the dark, treasure hunting for fuel. Playing tag with watch-dogs and *rats* is dangerous business! *Right here,* we'll have to do something about 'em. Just this morning I saw an educated rat sitting on the steps. Bold devil, I'd call him—ha! ha!"

For Mother and Dad, Beatrice could only say, "Sometimes, Hardy, you chant a funny lingo. If you and your folks weren't such nice people, I might think you were double-talking."

'She's off balance,' he thought. What a chance!" He spoke quickly, "Well, Beeb, I *am* a bit impetuous—a bit testy, perhaps—pure-quill splinter from the old oak. Say, by the way, girl, I'm glad I didn't have to hunt you up. Got a letter from Mom, the old dear. Came in the noon mail. The folks are throwing a party tomorrow evening. Impromptu affair. Informal. Mom would have dropped you a bid but didn't know how I stood in. I'll be leaving around 9 in the morning. How about it, kid?"

Nearly the last ounce of Bea's ebbing courage drained away in her reply, "O.K. It's a date."

Returning to her room, she found Dot already there.

"Here I am" she remarked.

"And much the worse for wear," said Dot, "Out with it!" she demanded.

"There's nothing worth telling."

"But don't forget your appointment."

"I'll be there."

"Gosh! You act like it's a date with an antedeluvian dentist."

"I'd rather have all my teeth pulled."

"Should be a thrill of a lifetime."

"It—will be"—Beatrice said slowly.

"It *should,* Dot snapped. I'd scrap the whole faculty for a 22-carat date like that. . . . You could leave out the brains too."

"The Madam's have been useful to her."

"Useful! 'Poor opiates' I'd call 'em. Bea there are a lot of darts in cupid's quiver."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"But not for me."

"Specialize if you want to. But if brains are trumps and hearts in the discard, you've a fist-full with a *photo mind* for a joker," Dot informed her.

"Sounds curious. Explain please?"

"Why Meggy, *my* boy friend, says Cy has a photographic mind. Dr. Hargrave wants him to give a demonstration. But your boy friend is—"

"Stop it Dot! Please, I have no boy friend."

"Sorry little one. My mistake. Any way Cy is a freak. He doesn't read like we do. He'll glance at a page and he has it. But he don't know how he does it. But he *can do*. And it's funny he remembers the whole mess."

BEA made no comment. Dot was not gifted with a photo mind but the observation she had, was in full blast. Beatrice was overly slow in changing her clothes, systematic, meticulous; from extreme care with her hair, to the fuss over her shoes. Dot's watch ticked full three minutes in the application of four drops of perfume—one on Bea's handkerchief—one under the lobe of each ear—the fourth dabbed over her heart.

"She's game," mused Dot to herself, "Three-quarters dead on her feet, but dolling up fit for a prom. Wonder what its all about?"

The silence was oppresive to Dot. For relief, she said, "You know, Bea, I can just imagine the library session. He will plow up enough notes in fifteen minutes to keep you busy for a week. It'll be just volume after volume 'til the end."

"Yes," repeated Beatrice, disconsolately; *"To the end."*

At supper, Dot anticipated an unpleasant all night session and fortified her inner self accordingly.

Beatrice minced through one cup of weak tea, one soda cracker and one scanty spoonful of applesauce.

At a minute to seven she entered the library. Cyrus met her at the door. In a corner near the shelves there was ample table space and nobody to bother them. Placing a note book on the table Beatrice said, "What do we do now?"

Cyrus replied, "We are tackling something new to us. Let's see what books there are in the 970.1 section. Then over there in General Reference I'm guessing we'll find the Transactions of the Bureau of American Ethnology."

"How about stacking them up right here on the table," Beatrice suggested.

"Let's go!" he agreed.

The truth was, Beatrice craved action as an opiate. No volume was too heavy for her. As the books piled up Cyrus remarked:

"From the dust on *you,* these haven't been touched since Rip swallowed the knock-out drops."

"How about yourself," retorted Beatrice.

"Oh, I haven't noticed myself."

"It's almost time to begin."

With the last volume tossed on the pile Cyrus said:

"Now I suggest you jot down the titles, filing numbers, pages and notes and leave the reading to me."

Beatrice seated herself across the table with a note book spread open before her.

"Well here goes," said Cyrus. And quite as Dot predicted the work proceeded. Beatrice had great difficulty in getting down the reference quotations before Cyrus had enough brief summaries of the subjects to stagger a shorthand expert. But she did her best to hold the pace.

Only once did Cyrus interrupt the steady grind. He'd found a faded newspaper clipping between the pages of a certain volume. He handed it to Beatrice saying, I found it right here where

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Brinton mentions the association between the Thunder Bird Myth and the American Eagle. What a grand bird Old Abe must a' been, Mascot to the 8th Wisconsin in the Civil War. Saw thirty-six engagements; mustered out after three years of service and died of old age, an honored veteran, in retirement. Always went into action from a staff along side the colors, brave as a lion. Our forefathers weren't so dumb in choosing Old Baldy as our National Symbol."

Beatrice glanced at the clipping. "Quite interesting," she remarked, handing it back for return to its file. As Cyrus replaced it he remarked, "The memory of him is precious to *all of us* now." This accidental interlude gave Beatrice a chance to catch *up*. It didn't last. Soon she was one volume behind, then two, then three and then, at a stand still. The first break on her speed was the shade of Cy's hair—it was never quite so black, so warmly soft, so neatly trimmed and combed—none, to her, so beautiful and glossy, as he bent beneath the lamp upon the table. The second decelerating force embraced Cy's features — strongly masculine — high forehead, sloping slightly—square chin, entrancingly dimpled; a nose, slightly equiline but not too much and not too little; eyebrows arched divinely over piercing black orbs which enacted every emotion of the moment; complexion flawless, swarthy—and a mouth with lips . . . she would never dare to touch! In her over-zealous scrutiny of his lips, she hopelessly bogged down, Cy caught her staring blankly at the note book with pencil point, immovable. "Hie there little girl, what's the matter?" And he smiled as only her man from God could do.

"I think we have enough to keep me busy."

"As you say," he replied. "Only I thought we'd corral as many of these misty thingum-bobs as we could. Then tomorrow we'd sort 'em out and tomorrow evening we'd just relax."

BEATRICE couldn't speak, couldn't move. Cyrus met the enigma of his life. Across the table from him, Beatrice stared into space, silent, eloquent in beauty — exquisite—tantalizing—maddening! He tried to break the spell by gathering up the volumes. Some reached their proper places. He seated himself again. Perspiration moistened his forehead as he watched her intently. With the last faint flutter of courage, Beatrice whispered.

"There-will-be-no-evening-ever-for-us-again-Cy-I have-another-date."

"There will be no evening ever for us again Cy, I have another date."

Her cherished features took strange shapes with the welling of his eyes. He choked, made a vain attempt to speak, slumped forward on his arms. His powerful fingers clutched and clutched in convulsive torment. Unseeing, they closed upon her wrist—upon the bracelet—upon something sharp suspended from it.

The hands ceased their contortions. The body raised. The warm kindly blood of faint hope congealed. The features became transfixed. The old Cy was gone. The new Cyrus arose, came around to the other side of the table, assisted Beatrice with her wrap, gathered the scattered notes, placed them neatly between the covers, and followed her quietly from the room.

Drum Pond was tiny, round as its name, and hidden—a half mile distant. An orchestral croaking seemed to celebrate a rebirth of all nature. One frog with a booming crescendo loudly contested for admiration.

"What a whopper," said Cyrus, casually.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Must be like one of those giants," said Beatrice. "He'd be worth seeing."

"We can walk that way."

A transport droned overhead. Glancing up, Beatrice remarked, "Must be off its course. Wonder where its heading?"

"Wonder where any of us are. There are times when one seems without chart or compass, yet are destined to navigate a boundless forbidding ocean, which encircles the whole *flat* world." Cy's hand swept toward the last farewell kiss of a day that neither, wished to forget, nor remember. A veil of mist lying low obscured the hilly horizon,—a ghostly illusion of a sea. Down the crescent walk toward the gate, a shadowy figure rounded an intercepting walk and disappeared behind the buildings. If it was Junior, Beatrice hoped he hadn't seen them. Once out of the gate they took a side road toward the pond.

"It's a beautiful moon, Miss Melicent," said Cyrus, "But it's threatening in the east."

"My eyes have bothered me a little, but I thought I saw some sharp flashes as we came out of the gate."

"Suppose you noticed the strange cloud formation in that thunderhead. Great long pinions stretching across the sky above the hills. A whale of a bird! One can appreciate why the aborigines introduced birds and animals into their polytheistic concepts."

This was not Cy at all. Neither was his cold, practical, critical, prosaic comments in rationalizing another people's religious viewpoints. He talked rapidly, —"The subject of your assignment, per se, is far more embrasive than I had anticipated. It appears impossible to give the matter a truly comprehensive treatment in the meagre limits of your theme. I suggest the myths and legends be briefed under general classifications. Then it appears appropriate to treat of the inclusion of these figments into the polytheisms of the Red Races . . . ." On and on he rambled with cosmogonies, atheistic concepts, Biblical concepts, sacrifice (animal and human) in religious doctrines, eventually concluding his systematic 'brick-on-brick' building of an outline, by saying, ". . . They do never-the-less teach that the aborigines was by no means atheistic, but, on the other hand, deeply religious; therefore worthy of our sincere respect as true Americans."

Beatrice was speechless. For what purpose, this? Merely to assist her in obtaining a sheepskin—a dry symbol of academic achievement, drained of the blood of life,—the only thing in life that really mattered. What did she care for *cosmogonies* and polytheisms with only a few fleeting minutes left for her in all eternity! Couldn't she bring the old Cy back for just a speck of time before giving him up forever? The road was rutted from the winter's wear. Loose gravel made the walking difficult. Suddenly, she cried, "Ouch" and started to limp.

"Pebble, real or phantom, the walking *is* difficult. Shall I assist you?"

"Don't trouble yourself." She raised her foot and removed her shoe, shook out the *phantom,* almost losing balance. Cyrus stood unconcerned. How she hated to turn back! How she wanted to see the 'marine band,' surprised by intruders—to see silvery rings dot the water—to punctuate the hasty exit of the nervous musicians — but . . . it couldn't be!

" 'Phantom pebble!' That was mean," she said, "What's the sense of a quarrel between friends?"

"Between acquaintances you mean. We have many acquaintances in life, but, few friends. Friendship is something deep, sincere, warm, dependable,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lasting—no mere expedient of the moment."

"I *know* we better start back!" They did. She lost all sense of the roughness of the road but she suffered the exquisite torture of sacrifice, of which Cyrus had so glibly spoken. The execution of happiness was yet to be endured.

WITHIN a few feet of the dormitory, Beatrice slowed the pace...! Her wrap slipped from her shoulders. Cyrus caught it, lifted it about her, grasping the neck band as he faced her. With numbing fingers he drew her face closer ever closer until she could feel his warm clean breath. His fingers gently relaxed—she was free!

"Good-bye Little Girl, forever," he whispered. He saw her lips tremble but he heard no words.

Beatrice watched him turn away and walked toward the parking rack for bicycles. She fingered the bracelet on her wrist, unfastened the point and pinned it squarely over her heart—but 'on the bias' as Cy had said it. When she stumbled into their room, Dot caught her before she fell.

"It's all over little one. It can't hurt any more," Dot said as she helped Bea over to her bed. She sobbed in an hysterical frenzy, Dot's arm about her urging her to hush fearful that all the girls if not the matron herself might aggravate a bad situation.

Turning to Dot with insane fury Bea said, "I hate you, Cy, Junior, his mother, his father, my mother, my dad! I hate everybody." Again she broke into hysterical sobbing.

"Seven specified cats out of the bag at last! You don't hate me. You love me like your own twin sister. As to Cy I am neither blind nor dumb. I know darned well you love your mother and dad as well as I do mine but somehow they are all mixed up with that big gorilla and his folks, and now *out with it!*"

Beatrice hesitated between gasps, reached into her blouse and drew out her mother's letter and handed it to Dot. She lit a cigarette and started to read. She perused it once, and again. She lit another cigarette. She turned to certain pages and reread them and as she folded it she said. "So you shook off the finest specimen of the genus homo that ever trod the campus for a worthless spoiled devil raised by buzzards and fattened on greed.... all to appease those gilded monsters who bore him. Didn't you read between the lines? What was the matter with you? You must a been so close to the crooked mess you couldn't get the proper slant."

"What else could I do?"

"Well at least you could of *let me* in. Why all those clever swindlers are using you for is a cover, until they have everything. Your pa offered his interest for what it cost him. His business is shaking from the gossip. And the next thing, your dad will appeal to Stoneere for a loan and probably put up the stock for collateral. Low lived shinanigan!"

"O what an idiot I have been, and he's gone Dot,—forever."

"Shush!" said Dot as some one tapped on the door. "We're in for it! Mrs. Fergerson, I bet!" She fanned the smoke away from the door and opened it a crack. "Oh, its you Mrs. Fergerson."

"Yes Miss Sempleton. I have a box for Miss Melicent. It was left at the office a few minutes ago. Good-night."

"Gosh what a relief," sighed Dot. Hefting it she added, "A fruit cake, a big mama. I have always loved you Bea but Oh how I love you now." She placed the box on the table. "Dry your eyes and give this a slant." She handed Beatrice a note.

Beatrice tore it open, "I—I—I c—ca—can't see a thing. It's all blurred. You read it."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I—I—I c—c—ca—can't see a thing. It's all blurred." She shoved the letter back to Beatrice, "Anyway it is too p-p-personal. . . . Darn you we won't get dried out in a week. Even the clouds are bawling." Dot jumped for the window as a gust of wind brought in a sprinkle of rain.

Beatrice took courage and read:

Dear darling adorable girl:

What harm is there in thus addressing you even though I cannot call you mine? Only my undying trust in God alone, has carried me through. For, when you told me tonight that there would be no evening, ever for us again, all that I had hoped to be for your sake, vanished. But, with the return of my reason I faintly discerned the fitness of His way, —the cords of affection, holding me to old Faith are parting—my *hope* parted from me tonight—for me, only a mission of helpfulness to others, remains, Pray that I may have the strength to bear it, whatever it may be.

As to myself I know little from whence I came. I think my name is Jason but I cannot be sure. I have heard my folks were good people and that I was born in the North woods. Kindly neighbors looked after me till I could struggle for myself. Why should such a one as I am, ever hope for such a one as you.

I'm going away—you to live in your world—and—I in mine. How strange it seems our lives were drawn so closely together only to veer away abruptly through some influence known to none but God and you. But, in my world, through all eternity I will love you.

Cy.

P. S. The parting gift herewith I trust will be welcome. It's paid for.

C.

BEATRICE untied the box and slowly lifted the cover. Something with long pink ears, furry and white as alabaster, quivered inside. Torn between emotions she said, "It was only this morning I t-t-t-t-old my darling I always had wanted a white bunny. He didn't forget. I wonder how he caught it! I don't think Cy ever forgot anything in his whole life. I must go after him, I must!" Brilliant flashes of lightning brought them both to their feet.

"My gosh you can't go tonight. You couldn't get as far as the gate in a storm like this. He's safe. He may not sleep very well but you can bet he is in bed by this time. You go to bed and get up early. We'll set the clock and sneak to catch the early bus."

"No! No I must go tonight. That devil is going to hurt him, maybe kill him I don't know. Just this afternoon when we were talking, he made a crack about Cy and like an idiot I passed it up. I'll either find Cy tonight or die in the attempt!" Beatrice sprang for her wrap and sank to the floor.

Dot lifted her up and gently placed her on the bed. She threw a quilt across her.

To herself she said "The bestest, gamest little kid I ever knew, no man is worth it—well-excepting 'Meggy.' Sleep, pal sleep!"

After leaving Beatrice, Cyrus had prevailed on Maggie to help him with the rabbit penned up in the cellar. She found a discarded carton and while Cyrus wrote his farewell note, she put the rabbit in the box. And too, it was Maggie who took the box to the matron's office. "For you, me b'y, I'll do this, but for no other man on earth includin' me worthless huzhband. Bless his soul!"

Cyrus mailed cash to Dr. Hargrave to pay for the rabbit. Sought his bicycle and found it gone, "What's the difference?" he said. Passing the dormitory he stopped a moment glanced at Bea's

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The rabbit pointed one furry paw at the startled man and then

window and muttered "good-bye little girl. Good-bye old Faith, good-bye all hope."

The wind more than the rain made the walking difficult. Up the road a darkened car was parked on the other side along the highway. He did not notice it. As he passed a tall oak, a man in a black raincoat crept from behind and followed close. His hand raised to await a flash of lightning for perfect illumination of his target! The flash came. Cyrus noticed its brilliance, and heard the deafening cannon like report. An instant later however, he neither saw nor heard.

All was oblivion—the gentle calm of quiet waters — deep — restful — the soothing balm of God.

How odd is life. How very strange may be the episode of death.

OF MAN'S perceptions, mortal, how strange is the dawn of consciousness! At times the gentlest stroke of a downy feather or the low buzy of the busy bee may rouse the soundest sleeper. If man be immortal we may but wonder?

Was it the feathery touch of the tufted heads of long slender, grasses, rocking with laughter, which kissed the sleeping figure? Or, was it one of nature's tiny children babbling in a tongue strange to mortal ears? May be neither! The sleeper clad in the whitest buckskin, beaded, feathered, gestured blindly, "Go away!" as if to brush off the impish teasing thing. But it would not leave. "Up with you," it seemed to say.

Rousing a very very little, he opened his eyes and snapped them shut—that pesky sneezy tickle of the morning sun!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

said in understandable words: "I am a friend to you, brother!"

Yet in the instant glimpse, he saw enough to rouse him slightly—just enough to listen. A bold mischievous intruder thrust his tiny white-whiskered twitching muzzle close, lest unfriendly ears might eavesdrop on a tete-a-tete unusual.

"How! White furry friend with long pink ears! Who may you be?" said he of buckskin, beads, and feathers.

"How! I am a friend to you and you are one to me," replied the furry ball.

"Such talk betokens *friendship*. But friendship is something deep, sincere, warm, dependable, lasting,—no mere expedient of the moment."

"Yea, verily. Friendship must be long worn to prove its quality. But alas! For me you see," said the little one as he looked at his tail. "In some ways I'm short! In necessity, my wits must serve as my expedient."

"Ha! ha! your wit does serve you well. You are most confounding."

"Is not one's *self*, the most confounding?"

"That implies that Iam you! But how can that be? If I am you and you are I then I must be beside myself."

"And there are others."

Oh, now am utterly confused—*I am you and* you *are I*, and there are others and each of us is two. Why there seems to be no end to a combination like that!"

"That has been one of the biggest problems in my family."

"Ha-ha! Mizzybo (How's that for a name?) Be serious. Your words are like the fox. Why do you seek me?"

"Got any spare carrots?"

"So that's it. No I haven't any. But you'd be welcome to them if I had."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Well I am just out of luck. But you are a friend *indeed* I know."

"Maybe, but I don't know. I don't know who I am."

"What luck! You can choose your relations."

"At times that might be an advantage. But with me—worse still—I know not from whence I came or whither I am going."

"Doubly fortunate!" It dizzies a fellow looking backward and forward at the same time."

"But I know not which way to go. I have lost *all* hope."

"Just look in the right direction. Isn't hope always one jump ahead of you?"

"But it all worries me!"

"Then there's hope for you! The fellow who doesn't *know* or *care* who he is or *where* he's been or whither he is going, is surely in a pickle."

"Well you do cheer a fellow up. You're a much bigger friend than I supposed."

"Doesn't a true friend grow bigger, the longer you know him?"

"Your wit Mizzybo is truly your expedient! I'll have a time in keeping up with you."

"Who don't? Ta ta! I'll be seein' you!" Suddenly Mizzybo grew to an astounding size and disappeared in a cloud of brilliantly luminous dust; so 'Sand-Man' mystic, that he of buckskin beads and feathers could not resist. So ranged the Great Hare's character in part,—good friend, magician, mystic, or simple mendicant in need of a meal.

Whether real or phantom it was not Mizzybo who roused him this time. It was the menacing buzz of a busy bee! He sat up and he got up! With alacrity, he dodged the tiny droning bomber. Pondering his plight thought he, "Crazy dream that! Called him 'Mizzybo.' Wonder why? He asked for carrots. What are carrots anyway? He spoke as if he knew me. I don't remember ever meeting him. In fact, I don't remember anything. And that is just what I told Mizzybo. Phantom or not he was a wise little rogue. I just said he was little. I'm not so certain about that either. He was a whopper before he left. Guess I'll be going. Which way to go? It makes no difference. The way of Mizzybo is well enough. Hope should be just a jump ahead of me."

HE TOOK long strides noiselessly. Every step of the trail seemed familiar. It was well worn. Many people had followed it. "To the left," he thought, "there's a pond where the cattails grow and where the frog with the voice of the big drum lives. Soon I come to the trail leading to the pond. I shall watch closely. It may be hidden."

A few strides further, he stooped to eye the ground for signs of the coyote or the turtle. Mah'ee the coyote would be most welcome. He would make Mah'ee glad, and have him walk with dignity beside him. First Man had been unduly harsh. What if his sole companion had been a bit neglectful? What gay coyote could relish guarding sticks—queer sticks that turned to humans and ran away? The thrilling urge to follow was just too much! Even humans have been weaker. So why heap bad medicine on all of Mah'ee's kind? It was unfair! If he chanced upon coyote, he would urge him to wear his plumed tail high, as did his forebear before he fell from grace.

Even to meet the lowly turtle would be something. From him he might learn the truth of legend. Was it so that another turtle held the world upon his back? Comforting reflections, these—but neither the coyote nor the turtle did he meet. However he was certain of a side path leading to the pond. Upon his hands and knees he crawled to note the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

little things. A white man would give little heed to a spider web with a few hairs clinging to it. But to him it marked the path, and too, was food for thought.

The Great Hare had learned the art of weaving nets from spider and had passed this secret on to Man so that he might, with nets catch fish—how strange one thought begets another! To some, fish were food. Maybe he was one who ate of fish. He was not sure. He had given no thought to food. It seemed he had not tasted it for many days. In that pond there would be fish. He was growing hungry. And with increasing effort he crept into the vine tangled thicket where another thirsty creature no larger than a Mah'ee had left tell-tale hairs clinging to a web.

Reaching a break in the heavy growth, he stood up. The ground sloped slightly. Peering downward, blinding flashes from rippling water, bathed in sunshine, dazzled him. In one respect at least his memory had not failed him.

He hurried to the water's edge. There were reeds, cat-tails, lilly-pads, gracing no ordinary pond. It was an exquisite body of water raised far above the lesser category by a sublime primeval beauty to the resplendent majesty of a lake, a water unsullied by the muddying hand of Man. Tall spruce, dark green, close-packed about its shores, like giant arrowheads, steepled their lofty tips in defense of its crystal azure beauty from prying mortal eyes! In reverence to the Great Unknown, he bowed his head.

He could not weave a net. So with flint knife, he cut and stripped a man-high pine, pointing and barbing its tip. A few dead trees felled by a hurricane projected into the water. Scanning the depths for the darkest areas, he found a likely spot and stealthily crawled along a log lest his shadow disturb the finny creatures. In a deep blue spot was a fine one! Waiting till it moved to the position he desired, his poised spear struck! He grasped the free end quickly and drew forth the shiny fellow from boiling foam. He had his food! And now for a fire with which to cook it. A *fire!* That would mean long labor. Even if he had it now he would not use it for, thought he, "I'm not hungry. The creature at my feet is from this lake, I want it not. This water and all its creatures belong to the gods and that is why the Earth Mother has so closely shrouded it from view."

Glancing skyward with outstretched arms, he asked, "Oh, Sun Father with shining shield, make known what I'm to do with this creature that I have so rudely snatched from sacred waters." His eyes plodded the turquoise sky for answer and chanced upon a winged creature, spiraling artfully closer, ever closer, to the water. Suddenly it swooped ripping the surface to a froth then beating vigorously with its graceful pinions, started an upward climb,—its mighty talons—empty!

"Oh you who speaks with the Great Voice, shall receive this gift!" said he of buckskin, beads and feathers. Holding his catch aloft, he said, "Come! Take it!"

THE bald eagle circled again, closer and closer, attracted by the shiny body of the fish. With the dart of lightning it dove and he with equal swiftness, tossed the fish high over the water. It never touched the surface. The eagle carried it to a lone tree and feasted to the fullest. Thought he, "Maybe he will return. I shall fashion a staff whereon he may rest." He cut and stripped a long branch, leaving two sizable shoots on its outmost end. Holding this in front of him he waited. The eagle took to wing, soared gracefully his way, hovered a moment and settled upon the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

branch. As the stately creature plumed its feathers, he sensed it saying to him, "How my friend! How Belikana." In another moment it took off spiralling upward, gradually contracting to a speck. As the fading dot held his vision-captive, it drew Belikana's mind—his very soul to the heart of heaven. If thus far, he had been adrift with neither chart nor compass, the final blending of the skyborn speck with the azure of infinite space, left him with a sublime sense of purpose for his being. Its nature he not yet knew. But he sensed that unseen gods would be his pilots. His words voiced the thought, "Surely *this* is a sign!"

In the dressing of its plumage the eagle had loosed two feathers. One, Belikana hid beneath his shirt. *No mortal eyes but his* would view it. It would give him courage. Then thought he, "Why not back to the well worn trail? This is hallowed ground. The trail will be easy to find. I need not seek the way I came."

So, following whichever immediate way appeared to offer the least obstruction, he started off. It was not long before his foot touched something very soft—a tiny beaded moccasin, bright, pliable, not long lost. "Now," he said to himself, "I have a real reason to carry on. I must find the little one. Thorns in the path of a tiny tot, may change its whole life's way." Long he searched. And when the Sun Father walked close to the earth—a babe with a bare and bruised foot, lay asleep before him. And —not just one babe, but two, alike as two grains of corn—the other with eyes swollen from insect bites. He gathered clean damp leaves of careful choosing and placed them gently over the eyes of the little one who could not see. In a nearby swamp he waded in for a lilly pad. He well-lapped its cleft. Dipped water with it, with which to bathe the bruised foot. *"Fire,"* he thought, "if I had fire to keep them warm! They are truly cold! But here I have not that with which to make it." "Oh, Mizzybo," he said aloud, "If you were here, you could help me!"

With faith that Mizzybo would help, Belikana sought the tenderest bark in lieu of carrots. He could but rest and wait. It seemed his eyes had scarcely closed before a tiny twitching muzzle touched his hand. "How! Good friend!"

"How Mizzybo, you heard me! See, —I'm in need of fire. I'm certain you can get it."

Surprised beyond expression, Mizzy pointed to himself and shouted, "Who? *Me?!!!*" He thumped the ground in agitation, "For *you* I'll see to it but no other man is worth it."

"I knew you would not fail me. I have no carrots but here's the best I have to offer."

"Well,—let me 'have at' your toothsome morsels. For fire I must journey far." With gusto, he downed the luscious bits. "Ta, ta! I'll be seein' you!" said he, and bounded off.

Belikana then saw more, — His strange eyes followed every move of Mizzybo—a new experience, a gift of gods!

By canoe and paddle, Mizzy' coursed the waters of a distant stream. And where, along its banks, smoke curled from a wigwam roof, he put ashore. With stealth, he moved. And with a scrap of tinder-bark hugged closely, he made a play for pity; Pity of a maidens' heart for a poor meek and lowly creature atremble with the chill of evening. She carried him within the wigwam where embers burned. Thus came Mizzybo to fire, and soon—fire to the tinder! His escape was hasty—no less risky, with the maiden *and her sister* in pursuit! When out of breath within a thicket, Mizzy's friend Mah'ee took

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

over; and he, in turn, to hurry matters, gave the tinder to a birdie, brown of feather. Thus, by air was speeded fire in completion of its transport. And thus was burned a ruddy vest on Pilot Robin —'Robin Redbreast' as we call him.

It was Belikana's feet which roused him. They were much too warm. Grateful, he fanned the tiny fire and added fuel to it.

At dawn of the new day, he gathered berries for his infant charges but took no food himself. One who had spoken with the Great Hare and had received a sign from the eagle with the white head, must fast, lest his occult powers pass. Nothing should be done detrimental to his mission. If supplication to his deities remained unanswered it would be his own infractions of divine laws which interferred, not faulty hearing of the gods—the Redman, himself would be to blame.

THE three were ready and took the right direction, though he knew not why, excepting—where Mizzybo found fire, there should be other dwellings. Long they trudged to reach that distant winding creek. And far down its banks he saw the wigwam of the smoking roof. Beyond, as he had thought, were many more—a motley assortment,—in shapes, *grotesque*—in materials, sundry.

"Odd village this" thought he, "These very dwellings bespeak association of many tongues, living, I hope, in peace with one another."

What a picture Belikana scanned: Flimsy brushwood wickiups; many hide-walled cone tepees, topped with pole tips; low-domed wigwams; houses round and capped with grass; some with phantastic totems; open palm-thatched shelters; and a few long bow-roof structures wherein might dwell a number.

And there was *life!* Smoke curled from many fires and humans moved—the warrior with his bow and flints—the squaw with papoose on her back—stone-dazed tillers of the soil—and artisans of many skills.

Beyond, the ground waved with many hills. There was the green of forest patches, shimmering blue-grey spots of distant waters, and still further, villages most remote yet like to the one, close by, but by distance lost—a distance blending with a sea encircling his queer flat world—a sea where islands were of pinpoint dots and watercraft, that none but the eyes of mind could find.

At sight of the nearby village Belikana's charges broke away. An eager and familiar face greeted them with open arms. But she failed to note their frantic gestures toward him, their benefactor. Punching her with their chubby fists and pointing, they tried to say "Him find us! Him know where we live! Him feed us! Him make us warm with fire—him *no make,* no come from no where."

"What you try to tell me?" she asked with a teasing laugh. "Man found you. He knew where you live He feed you. He make you warm with fire which come from no where! Jossakeer story! Where is man?"

They pointed and as Belikana slowly came closer, she no longer wondered how such a man could bring fire from 'nowhere'. Surely the Great White One's own blood trickled through his veins. The faint tan of her cheeks grew tinted as leaves of autumn.

"How!" she said; her heart pounding as if to burst, "My father will be grateful. He will give you many presents. My twin brothers have been gone two days."

"To see you is a gift which overpays me," he replied with truth. Within himself, he mused, "I have seen that face but I know not where." His brow furrowed. There were the all too familiar

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

eyes, the shapely nose, the little ears, the graceful lines of figure, the plaintive voice. Seeing her pass her hand across her forehead, he was not surprised to hear her say.

"Sometime, somewhere me know you. Me know no more."

"This is our secret. I am thinking the same thing," he replied.

In one respect they were on common ground. As she turned toward the wigwam of the chief she said, "Come you shall meet my father, Big Bison." With the twins clinging to her hands, Belikana followed.

In front of his wigwam sat the aged chief. The haze from the red willow bark within his pipe, framed a face etched by the cruel knives of many winters. Excitedly she told the finding of the twins. Then urged the stranger to come closer so that her father might see him better. It was a task for *him* to move but he struggled to his feet to greet the stranger warmly.

"You come long way! You shall have food." And to the girl he ordered, "Prepare him good meat. Big Bison speak with stranger."

Belikana protested. Too willingly she hurried off, paying no attention.

The old chief repeated, "You come long way?"

HOW to answer was a puzzle. "It is not far to the place where I found your babes. Before that I remember little. But in a vision, the Great Hare spoke with me. Other than this I know not. What if I know not from whence I came and who I am? I know the Great Hare who brought fire. I saw him take it and with this I warmed the twins. But how I saw him a far off, I know not."

The old man eyed him curiously. Awe and pity moulded his words, "You have eyes greater than eyes of the eagle, yet you not know where you come from? You not know who you are?"

"And it is true, too," the stranger replied, "I care not from whence I came or who I am. I have eyes greater than eyes of the eagle and the eagle with the *white head* has shown a sign to me! A far off there is a lake hidden amongst the hills. There the eagle with the white head came and alighted upon a staff I held. Then did he name me Belikana."

"Truly" said Big Bison solemnly, "This is sign! If you no wish to eat. Then it is right—Your powers will be greater! Great Voice surely speaks to you. He manifests Himself through sign of eagle with white head."

"The Great White One—the Great Spirit—is mighty and All High. Truly he speaks through the Great Voice and works in strange ways;" Belikana sagely commented.

"You speak words of jossakeed—prophet! Remain with us. We give you food when again you eat. You will never be in want for raiment."

"Belikana thanks you, Sire. He has no place to go. He will strive to give wise counsel when you choose to have it."

The young woman overheard Belikana's decision as she approached to say the meat was ready.

"But I must not eat this day nor for two more days," he told her, "Lest the powers given me be taken from me."

"Strange talk," she snapped, "Meat is good. Man must eat."

"Sorry! Meat prepared by your hands must be good. In due time I shall eat. You will prepare the food, I know, when I return."

Plaintively she asked, "Where go?"

"I have a mission to fulfill. On this day and two more I must be alone."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"You *are jossakeed*! ! ! You go to speak with gods! You go to make God Medicine! But no own parfleche?" she exclaimed, astonished that he was a superman yet possesed no sacred medicine bag.

NEARLY every man and woman carried with them a parfleche. What odd bits in the way of charms which it might contain were known solely by the owner and were considered sacred.

Said Belikana, "I may be what you say I am. Truly I own no parfleche."

"Me have new parfleche given me. May me give it you."

"If it be your sacrifice to the Great White One, I will receive it. From you it will be doubly sacred."

In a fluster she hurried after the medicine bag and when she handed it to him he said, "This shall aid me in following the path which the Great White One chooses I shall follow. Now I must be gone. On the third day I will return."

Belikana showed a self-reliance, a purposeful light in his kindly eyes as he took leave. Her eyes followed him till he disappeared in the deep wood, she saying to herself,

"He is sent me by Great Spirit—Great White One. My heart tells me so."

THERE was much excitement that evening within the village. A stranger from afar had come to them, bringing the twins. He was a good man and he would return in a few days to remain as one of their people. The Chief, Big Bison, that day had ordered the council to meet with him. And it was this meeting which Belikana, (now within the dense primeval forest), saw and heard, he knew not how.

The house or lodge wherein the council met, was long, roomy, bark-walled and its roof arched throughout the length. Gathered about the flickering light within, sat warriors and artisans, among them, the venerated Medicine Man, Black Arrow, with them three years, - Venerated? - or - feared? —Which was it? Through his charms, harm had befallen many, and hardly none could vouchsafe with certainty, that even his herb medicines had proven efficacious. Yet every ritual for good or for evil purpose, every herb potion prepared had been paid for in advance. *Well* paid for too, he, setting the price to the last speck of ability, of the one to foot the bill, even to their enslavement to do his biding should wampum be lacking.

Black Arrow scowled as he listened to the chief address the council:—

"Big Bison speaks to you of stranger who came to us this day. He brought with him, Big Bison's children, lost two days. He asks of us, nothing. He does not eat. He speaks strangely. He tells of speaking with Great Hare. A sign has come to him by shores of hidden lake. Eagle with white head came to him. Eagle with white head speaks with Great Voice. Stranger knew we were here. But he knew not *how* he knew. He does not know himself. He does not care! He does not know from whence he came. He does not care! He tells that eagle with white head named him 'Belikana'." He has gone into the forest to talk with Great Voice. He will return in three days to do my people much good. For, evil has befallen us many, many moons. Some of my people make much talk!"

"They say Big Bison closes his ears to them in council. But does not Big Bison permit each man to speak? Does Big Bison, not then rule fairly? They say they have little corn. But the people of Big Bison know that an evil

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

demon sometimes blights young corn. Do not people of Big Bison try to divide little corn some way so no man is without food? Can people divide more than they have?"

"No! No!" chorused a number.

The chief continued:—

"Big Bison wishes to be a good father to his people. Now let him who would not receive this stranger, as his brother, *speak*!"

Black Arrow arose, threw out his chest, strode majestically to the center of the group and spoke:—

"Black Arrow speaks! Black Arrow is one who talks with gods! How can one who knows not himself, or from whence he came, speak with gods? Stranger speaks with voice of demon, and, in demons does he take counsel! Black Arrow say, it is stranger who makes Bad Medicine, from far off. And so, young corn die. Now Black Arrow sees demon stranger come close to bring skull, to bring failure, to bring death to Big Bison's people." His voice was lowered to a whisper in making this prophecy. He knew every ear would strain to hear and be impressed the more.

With an all-wise air the gloom dispenser seated himself allowing others to join in protest. "We will no call this evil stranger brother." And there were others who seconded, yet in the shadows about the council fire, not one of all the muffled mouths which spoke could be correctly spotted.

BIG BISON rose and scanned all faces closely before he handed down his decision:—

"Big Bison wishes to be good father to his people. He does not wish them at war with one another, He, therefore, rules that stranger be received among his people, but *not as brother,* until by his wise counsel and making of *Good Medicine,* he is proved worthy."

Upon adjournment, there was much muttering as the group filed out.

In the solitude of the deep wood where the wild creatures of the Earth Mother, spoke in many tongues, Belikana spent much time in gathering potent herbs. He recognized the mat first glance and knew their uses, yet, he knew not how he knew.

A sprig, or, perhaps no more than a leaf or two of each, he rolled into a compact, conglomerate ball, binding it firmly. He was not sure of its occult potency, as he was positive of the true medicinal properties of each of its constituents. The amassing of the herbs and the rolling of the ball, would fix in his mind, its many elements. Its presence with him constantly would keep him ever mindful of his entire "stock-in-trade" and the need to keep it up. He felt he was to be a prophet, and, as well, a true physician, to the best of his ability. And when, in either office, he was called in counsel, he would rely upon himself, calling only on the gods, when his earthly measures failed.

To gain the sanction of his gods for the tiny herb-ball symbol, he cached it beneath a stone during his solitary probation. There were other charms to be included in his lot of mystic medicines and, at the proper time, he would place them all within the sacred parfleche.

For a symbol (and reminder) of his duties as a surgeon, he sought a small half-broken twig to depict a fractured limb. He found just what he wanted. It was finger-size and he neatly bound it, then cached this too, beside his herb-ball charm.

The third, a most mystic symbol, was the feather from the eagle,—the feather that no other eyes save his had seen. This would keep him firmly humble in the presence of his gods. It would give him courage when he faltered.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG.
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

How to get the fourth, and *final, charm of charms*—Belikana, did not know. If he could but secure it, he would have the ambition of ten men, for in it, he'd *find hope!* What was it? A lock of *her hair*, of course! He could not go to her and plead for it. No! That would need the courage of ten feathers of the eagle. Furthermore, if, in this manner, he secured it, its mystic potency would be lacking.

Now in his fasting, he grew weaker, and with weakness he grew drowsy in the contemplation of his problem. For the third time, Mizzybo came to him.

"What's got you down!" queried Mizzybo.

"Why, again I seek hope," replied Belikana, deeply dunked in melancholy.

"Webby memory. Spider woman's work," piped Mizzybo, "Remember pal, hope's just one jump ahead of you! Ta, ta! I'll be seeing you!" With a hind foot he drummed vigorously on the parfleche at Belikana's side and with a leap, was off into the forest. The neophet shook himself. "Been dreaming, as usual," he mused. Casually if not thoughtlessly he opened the medicine bag for the first time. Within was a lock of soft and beautiful hair—the most beautiful he had ever seen. It was bound with a cord of sweet grasses. He drew it out and thrust it under his shirt next to his heart as his silent answer to the significance of the gesture. She, his hope was one jump ahead of him. The four charms benificent to his mission, he now had. The sign was yet to come, at which time he might place them all within the parfleche with certainty of their mystic value.

NEAR sundown of the fourth day, heavy clouds rolled up to shroud the clear sky in premature darkness. Faint lightning and low rolling thunder arrived without the more usual distant heralding, as if the Great Voice was speaking to him alone. The sign had come! This was the time to place the ball of herbs, the stick, the eagle's feather and the lock of her hair within the sacred parfleche. As he closed the medicine bag, a blinding flash told him his period of fasting was over.

Gathering up his bulky bundles of medicinal natures, Belikana started on the long walk home. No other one but him, could tell with certainty what was in his own parfleche.

A little after daybreak, he wandered into the village, the twins espying him afar. They were the first to greet him.

With one on each knee, he seated himself outside Big Bison's wigwam to await an audience with the Chief. Naturally, he was just a little hopeful that somebody else would soon be up to prepare the morning meal for her father. To kill time and forget the call of the inner man, Belikana told the twins the story of the stealing of the fire which kept them warm. And as he finished, one of them punched him with a tiny thumb, "See, see!" he cried, Birdie cook worm!" The little one pointed at a robin endeavoring to swallow an unusually large night-crawler, the wriggling morsel dragging against the robin's breast.

"Surely, he likes his food warm! That was a pretty big worm. He should have cut it up first. You watch and you'll see one of those fellows do that sometime!"

Other children and sleepy-eyed grown-ups emerged from motley grotesque dwellings. Smokes from many fires, with fumes all too-savory *blew his* way—it surely seemed so, anyway. The twins climbed down from his knees. Their own inner cravings smothered immediate interest in stories, no matter how fascinating. Belikana made no move to stop them as they beat

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

upon the hide-walls of *her* wigwam, shouting "Man come back!" Again and again they repeated the announcement with increasing peristence. Their words had been well-chosen. She *fully* comprehended their significance on the first repeat.

From her wigwam she hurried to the shore of the little creek. He stole a glance as she viewed herself in smooth reflecting water. Many other women came and went before she deemed herself presentable. In their morning chat, mutually interesting, Belikana adroitly avoided any reference to the tiny tress of her hair. Her keen eyes scanned his raiment, hopeful she would see the 'lock' up on his heart. "Where can it be?" she wondered.

She had heard of one *sure* way to a man's heart — the gastronomic trail. Then she was not so sure, for, he declined to eat of her tempting flavory steaming dish until her father tasted first—Big Bison deserved the greatest deference. Now courtesy at times makes trouble. Meat does not improve in over cooking. And so, she literally lifted her father from the arms of Morpheus. She was the only one who would dare to do so—she had a *way* with her.

Big Bison was a bit fretful in the morning light until his failing vision told him that the stranger had returned. The young man had kept his word, The Chief was hopeful that he would help his people. His old eyes were more observant than many realized. He saw huge bundles of various herbs and barks, piled upon the ground, yet he said nothing. However he *thought*. Black Arrow never gathered things like these—arnica—wintergreen —camomile and many others, new and strange. The herbs that Black Arrow gathered seemed of a different sort—they usually prolonged an illness or aggravated pain. The sick one required many changes in the remedies, each at a cost to the patient or his family. And, of course Good Medicine rituals came high. But to be true to the will of the council, Big Bison held that Belikana's deeds must prove his worth. He listened intently to the stranger's story of his sojourn. Belikana could not well tell of his incredible seeing of the council meeting, without arousing the Chief's suspicion. So, after hearing all that could be told, the old Chief said.

"Belikana, you tell of strange visions. You receive sign from Great Voice. You see with eyes greater than eyes of eagle with white head. So, Big Bison rules you stay with us, to cast out evil spirits from my people, to heal wounds of battle, to heal wounds of hunt and to give wise counsel to my people. But, my people take you not as brother until you make *Good Medicine*—until you speak *true words* as prophet. Then will you be received as brother—then will you be recognized as shaman."

Belikana hesitated a moment, then shyly replied, "Belikana seeks nothing in return for what good he may do. The Great White One would so will it."

The Chief's daughter was glad that Belikana's acceptance speech was brief —the savory meat was losing its savor —the fire beneath the kettle needed frequent poking.

THE first few days were periods of adjustment for Belikana. Friendliness, reverential fear, suspicion and ridicule, all played their parts. He had little to say, yet his good offices as a doctor gained gradual recognition. He proved his surgical skill by the setting of a broken arm. The splints, he made himself and applied them at the proper time. Even less friendly members of the tribe learned to listen with deaf ears to Black Arrow's ridicule:—

"Belikana's *Good Medicine?* Ugh!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We should call him, *'He-Knows-Bad-Medicine."*

This barb thrown at every opportunity should be a potent agent in propaganda. One of the things that vexed, particularly, was the generosity of patients calling upon Belikana's aid. Only when wampum or food or other articles of utility were thrust upon him, would he accept them—but never for himself. He passed them on to the truly needy, thereby allowing the giver the satisfaction of 'squaring accounts'.

The apparent handsome reward without a bargain for it was something new to Black Arrow. He tried it once. He gave an emetic where a sedative was needed. Subsequently he viewed family unity at close range—in fast, too close! He did not receive gifts in abundance of types anticipated, although he did receive many articles of utility—the heavy and more durable sort, projected with unerring accuracy. Naturally he returned to his accustomed mode of gouging emolument.

Belikana occasionally found odd moments to devote to a hobby—the twins needed toys. To make two tiny bows, drums, canoes, or knives as near alike as hands could fashion them, was not easy—precision production to close tolerences. Any differences were threats to peace on the home front. Yet, *his heart* was in the building of them. He could be near his hope as he fashioned them. She knew the latest gossip and when gossip lagged, her heart was singing in her voice. But when her father was about, she left the men alone. They would talk over her head, she told them.

Big Bison as a young buck had made *wonderful* toys. With dead-pan ferver he offered practical and impractical suggestions. It gave him a chuckling confidence in the stranger to see him politely blow chaff from wheat. Both were learning much of one another.

One evening after the twins had been calmed to slumber by her sweet lullabies, she arranged her hairdo high as was the custom for a maiden. A spray of white violets was among her tresses and with emphatic nonchalance she passed him in the center of the village. Somehow he took notice. "She's even crushed the petals to release more fragrance," Belikana thought. There was no need for further invitation for a stroll. The Moon Mother, high overhead, threw sharp silver lances through the trees. Big Bison's daughter also trailed the heels of hope, yet she dared not closely follow. She wanted to know more of this strange good man. Maybe she could lead him into talking of himself—he might remember the place from whence he came. No remote star where dwelled strange godly creatures like himself. No world of the turquoise sky where spirits dwelled, but somewhere as real as the land of her own people. If such a place it was, on matter how far off, he would be a human like herself. She would have the right hope. Her world had been a little one. Distant ridges veiled in a misty haze bounded its extent. With thought of urging him to speak of places far beyond from whence he might have come, she pointed to the low flung dreamy mists, and said, "Great Hare smokes pipe! Must be heap big." He liked her dialect and tried his best to mimic it.

"Must be heap big—heap big smoke —heap far away."

"Great Hare live where you come from?"

He shrugged his shoulders. She tried a different approach,

"You come to my people to do good. To make them happy. To give wise counsel?"

"Great Voice show me sign. In Great Voice we have faith. With faith, me

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

try."

"All Big Bison's people no have this faith. No like rule of my father."

This was no squaws' gossip. He urged her on.

"Me see your people. Some grow much corn. Some little. Some have much wampum. Some have little. May be them who no like rule of Big Bison have little corn; have little wampum?"

"No! Many who like rule of Big Bison have little corn—little meat—little wampum!"

"Then why, some no like rule of Big Bison?"

"My father let each man talk. Then he rule the way of most talks."

"It is fair to so rule."

"But some say," she continued, "Big Bison's people are all papooses. Think like 'em. No can think big. No can speak big. They say Big Bison old man chief. No can think. No can see. No can do. So, Big Bison *rule*, no big no strong, Him very weak like old dead tree. Big wind come along puff! Blow him down, go squash on many people! So, people can no be happy."

BELIKANA smiled. He pondered. He was curious to learn what the opposition offered, "May be they plant new kind of tree? Eh? Him grow big strong! No wind blow him down. Then all people be very happy under big strong tree?"

"No. They say Stonemen have big chief. He think more big than many chiefs! *He-heap big think.*" And she held up her little hands to measure the size of the Stoneman head.

"Funny man him must be like palmetto tree—all top."

"No! No like tree, like stones. Stone head, stone legs, stone arms, *all* stone!"

"Stone heart?"

She nodded as she pointed to the distant skyline. Stonemen live far off over hills, may be over great water. They say Stonemen live in caves, and so no have light. So no can be happy."

"Why Stonemen no crawl out, so shield of Sun Father can give light to them?"

"Chief, he tell 'em, no room outside. He say he look. But he let no Stoneman come out,—look-see. Poor Stonemen!" She was serious, even sympathetic.

"Belikana see! Chief no let each man talk. *He* think! *He* talk and they *do!*"

She nodded and added an interesting bit, "Chief, he *Heap-Big-Think* like Sun Father! He make light for them, so no need Sun Father!"

"No need Sun Father? No need Moon Mother? No need Great Voice! May be he think Sun Father his papa," commented Belikana, with disgust.

A sinister agency guided from afar, smouldered within Big Bison's peaceful rule. Was it centered locally in one individual? He asked that question plainly. She hesitated in her answer . . . . , "Me - think - they - speak - words - of - another."

"But who is he who no speak himself?"

"If me give name, he will make my people suffer much, may be, sometime?"

"What you mean? 'People suffer much.' "

"People are men. Men sometime are wampum."

"Belikana see" His brow furrowed, he did not like what he had heard. Yet he sought to reassure her, "Belikana he say he will make Good Medicine. You fear for your people. People, too are women! Why you no fear for yourself?"

"*You* no fear for yourself."

"Me should no think of *me*. Only of others. Me know not myself. So, me

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have no right to think more of one than another."

He did not realize how uncertain *she* was about *herself* until she said, "Me know no who *me* am. Me know no from where me came. Running-Hoof bring me to Big Bison's people when me few moons old, Running-Hoof long gone to land of blue sky. But Big Bison me call 'Father,' he good to me; my people good to me."

"Your people good to me too!" he said.

She bit her lip, Why hadn't Earth Mother given her sense enough to heave a heart withering sigh after mention of Running-Hoof's heavenly abode, then, let the sigh do the rest?

Down the trail there was a huge moss covered log. Upon this soft green cushion they rested. Suddenly the evening air carried to them the booming voice of a giant frog,

"He must be heap big chief amongst his people!" she exclaimed.

"You know he live in hidden lake. Lake he belongs to gods. There me receive sign from Great Voice."

"Can you no take me there sometime? Would my eyes make dark its waters?"

"No! No make dark but make *more sparkle!*" he replied as he picked a squawberry vine which a moon-beam chose to kiss. He handed it to her. From the way she drew its tiny fragrant trumpets beneath her perfect little nose, he knew that he too, had overtalked himself—to overtake ones hope might hazard its loss. Better it remain a jump ahead.

On approaching the village he remarked, "Eagle with White head gave me name Belikana. Me not know what it means. What me call you?"

"Only you call me Chikeesikiss," she impishly replied. "You know what it means?" He did not.

THE new day gave additional burdens to Belikana. There was a troublemaker who talked much about himself and gave words for others to speak. He would discredit what he thought he knew of the council meeting as a dreamer's fancy. He would keep his ears open and his tongue still, so that which went into his ears, would not come out of his mouth. Throughout the day, he followed his accustomed routine. He walked among the people of the village, alert to every hostile inflection of an otherwise cordial greeting, every unfriendly glance, every slanderous comment.

And in this web of chat and gossip, he gathered flies of varied types,—harmless buzzers, many drones too lazy or indifferent to buzz, others loathsome from evil associations, and one pest above all others, fortified with a venomous sting shrouded with sanctity. To exterminate these pests would be a man's size job. Thriving as they did within the body politic, they were there through sufferance of the weak and the indifference of the strong, the latter calloused by self interest. Concerning these, Belikana sought counsel with Big Bison. Mayhap they might work together. Out of ear-shot of little pitchers as well as larger with much bigger ears, he made ready to pour forth his diverse impressions; — "Belikana has walked and worked among Big Bison's people with his ears cupped to see *that*, to hear *that*, which older ones may not. Would Big Bison wish to hear?"

The old Chief's eyes narrowed shrewdly;—"To be a good Father to his people, Big Bison must see through eyes of youth; hear through ears of youth. Hard stones will sharpen wisdom of many winters."

Belikana quickly concluded that Big Bison was no 'has-been in his dotage.' Therefore he could speak plainly yet

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

refrain from offending the kindly Chief.

"Are Big Bison's people partly to blame that so much evil has befallen them? In their hearts, do all thank the Sun Father for his shining shield that warms the corn? Do all thank the Great Voice—the Bird of Thunder—for bringing pollen to the corn—for bringing rain and moisture so that the Earth Mother may give corn to people? Do all invoke the spirits of the hunt that the bison may be plentiful? All such things do they do? Is it true that people *take!* but, are *all grateful?* Are not the prayers of many people for things they *want,* and, if the Great White One decides these things are not good for them, do they complain but do not blame *themselves?*"

"Big Bison *know* you *know.* He does not make his people do these things but he wishes they would with their own hearts. Many good people make prayers with their mouths and with their hearts, and if gods no hear, *do blame themselves.* Many other good people make no prayers with their mouths, but in their hearts are grateful for good things that come to them, and they give to others, good things as good people should. Even though they no see gods as Belikana does, they are good people. But Big Bison him has faith, which his fathers taught him."

"Belikana heard every wise word of Big Bison. It is right that your people give thanks themselves and from their hearts. It is right that you do not make them do so. Yet why have some lost faith?"

"Pay little wampum,' him say—'Great White One no hear; may be make Bad Medicine. But, pay much wampum; get Good Medicine—' Me make 'im hear!' 'Bah! Too much *wampum, wampum, wampum.* Big Bison no believe jossakeed story. Me no papoose, my people no papooses!"

HE OF many winters pulled down the lower lid of his eye as both men chuckled. Yet Big Bison seriously wondered how this young unknown would defend the cause.

"Funny talk," said Belikana, "Great White One is deaf to little wampum. But for much, *he* makes Him hear. Is he bigger than the Great Voice."

"Oh, he just big wind in bag. Squeeze him out through mouth—make much holler." He puckered his dry lips in a vain attempt to whistle. Then, compromised with age, and puffed his cheeks.

"But if big whistle-talk costs much wampum, is that Good medicine for Big Bison's people?"

"No," snapped the chief, "And it is not good for many to walk on snow when there is no snow."

"Belikana is puzzled? Man could cover his eyes with his hands to keep out light when there is snow."

"And 'snow' are good people, they walk on as if they no see 'em, but they see wampum very good through fingers."

"It is the way with some people. Such ones are in many tribes yet are not of one blood as some say. Some gather much, some little. Yet when Great Voice makes very loud talk they forget wampum. They . . ."

"Yep! They no care about *wampum!* They only care about hole to quick crawl in where they make heap loud prayer to gods while Bird of Thunder flap! flap; r-r-r-" and he growled with a lusty roar.

"So it is that even they who walk on snow when there is none may sometimes find the faith they have lost."

"Big Bison now know you speak with authority from Great Voice so, him ask;—Do not these Wind-in-Bag and these He-Hide-His-Eyes peoples upset faith of people in Big Bison

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rule?"

"These weeds and such weeds as these, do over grow the trail, do hide the way of peace, do make a nesting place for deceivers, traitors, thieves and killers, who would stop the tongues, conquer and enslave those who trust Big Bison rule—those who still hold faith in the Great White One. His Voice, The Great Dark Bird, the Bird of Thunder is all powerful! It is His white blinding arrows that uphold the Voice."

"Belikana speaks with great wisdom, so Big Bison ask,—If white blinding arrows make strong the Voice, will not many bows, many arrows, many knives, many shields, make strong, good people under Big Bison rule?"

"Is it right to use these things against a brother Redman?"

Big Bison scowled angrily, he was bewildered. This stranger who seemed of high authority, disdained the use of force. Was he at heart a coward? Big Bison gestured the streaking of his cheeks with paints of war. He gripped his flint knife hard and lashed out his answer, "When redman lights fire within him to welcome demon, him is not Big Bison *brother!* He tepee—longhouse—council fire of evil. Smash him and you smash meeting place of demons! It is better that redman ghost to walk and so give no home to weazel demon!" He buried the knife to the hilt in the hard ground, his face contorted to a mask of savagery.

Belikana smiled with steady eyes, "Now Belikana knows we can work together. For we are as poles to the great tepee, where we light our inner fires to welcome the Great White One, the Sun Father, the Great Voice, the Moon Mother, the Earth Mother. We are journeying toward the land of the Blue Sky, as brothers, though from different earth places. We are drawn closer together the farther we go. At death, our paths are closely narrowed, mayhap cross one another. Who knows? But thereafter, our paths diverge a little to then be free beneath the Great Blue Bowl. It seems the way of the Builder of the Great Tepee, that by being bound together as brothers and thereby being drawn toward one another, each helps to give the other strength and therefore strengthens all. Yet if the poles be divided one from another, this weakens all. The Great Tepee can not stand the onslaught of the storm. Much worse, still, is he who would stand alone feeding upon the blood of others. It is their blood we must save."

The young man arose as if to ask leave of the Chief. With a kindly gesture Big Bison motioned to him to sit down again.

"Big Bison, he made chief because he once strong warrior. He once make his people strong. He try to be good father to his people. Yet he no like man who no fight when he should fight for good people. So, Big Bison, *war* mad knife against brother. But, ha, ha! you when Belikana say, Is it right to use you fool Big Bison. You make him say what you *think*. So then me say Big Bison people must work together—make many bows—all these things. Keep poles of Great Tepee strong against storms."

Belikana nodded, "Many must be made and quickly!" Does Big Bison think there will be opposition?"

"Yes but Big Bison will make talk for many bows." He slapped his knee gripping them with a firmness that meant business.

THEY both arose, each determined upon the same goal but by different ways and means. The young man had avoided any reference to that which Chikeesikiss had told him about

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Stonemen. Her confidence was a seal upon his lips.

Big Bison had been equally scrupulous. What might be said would suggest adequate defense and stop.

In the matter of weapons, Belikana had seen few craftsmen among Big Bison's people. Flint was scarce, inferior stones were poor substitutes. Belikana wondered whether flint would even prove satisfactory—the potential enemy were odd. He had a vague recollection that no form of stone would be effective against the Stonemen, although they themselves hurled flints with killing force. Yet there was a value in providing customary weapons; there were those amongst the Stonemen who were vulnerable and obliged to obey the 'Heap-Big-Think.' Belikana had no heart in injuring these but the innocent would have to suffer with the guilty, if matters worsened. So puzzled was he that he sought the quiet of the woods to find the answer. At the lake he would feel completely at ease—a nearness to his gods about its waters. He found it more than tranquil! There was the cool soothing fragrance of green growing things, commingled with the gentle music of the birds. And most overpowering of all, the noiseless flutter of butterflies—these were an 'opiate.' Before he knew it, there came to him, the Wolf He did not like its crafty way yet Wolf was in fashion, an oracle with an augery of forbidding nature. Wolf laid at Belikana's feet a bow with arrows saying, "Wolf gives these symbols of conflict, Wolf has given these to many people in far places. Sneak upon the enemy, kill, kill, kill! Yow! Yow! o-o-o-!" Wolf vanished quicker than he came and Magpie fluttered down to say, "Me saw Wolf he go many places, always give bow and arrow. Then man kills man."

"This *is not* good," remarked Belikana.

"No it *is not* good. But what can people of land of Mouse *do* when Stonemen kill? They must kill too!"

"In land of Mouse you say?"

"Yes in land of Chipmunk too!" Stonemen kill, kill, kill! And in far places Racemion of hard horn and jeweled head battles Angont, serpent of evil which sometimes hides beneath water."

Two other feathered commentators tuned in. They had not scooped the head lines but were no cub reporters. Said the dark one, "Raven has blacker news — Bear and Heap-Big-Think smoke peace pipe, peace pipe, Calumet."

"It isn't so!"

"O-o-oh! o-o-oh! yes they did," vouched Owl, perched near by. "Owl judge though, sometime old 'Heap' make 'gift' to Bear. Hex Hex! (It sounded like a cough through his chin feathers.) "You asleep. May be you wake up sometime."

Belikana sensed he might be drowsing. But he could not wake until a crash of thunder did it for him. The sky told him this was no mere nightmare! Above him soared the Eagle with the white head, and above him the cloudy form of the Great Dark Bird. Belikana raised his arms in salutation saying, "Oh Great Voice,—Oh! Great Eagle with white head who knows Great Voice, Belikana has received your message."

He placed his four sacred tutelaries at the corners of a square upon the ground. In the center he again raised his arms, pledging, "Belikana will keep your message secret to carry out his mission. Belikana has faith, you know all things that have been and are to be."

Replacing his charms, he stepped beneath a cedar—his gods impressed

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

him that such trees were spared the flaming arrows of the Great Dark Bird.

The day was wearing on. An important meeting of the council was pending. Belikana should be present to support Big Bison's plea. He *would* risk to venture from beneath the cedar. But when about to move a spider dropped quietly upon his hand. Recalling the legend that it was friendly, Belikana gently lowered it to the ground saying, "Why you come to see Belikana now?" The spider's reply could hardly be construed as friendly—a paralyzing sting. Belikana instantly grew faint and slumped to the ground unable to move a hand. Then a white flaming arrow struck so close that he was blinded long enough for a very earthly thought, "Belikana know not what to do. He can not move. He can not see!" But he did *feel*,—a soft furry muzzle, all atwitch. "How Mizzybo it's you although I can not see."

"By carrots he knows my nose!" And loudly he shouted, "You're asleep or blind or something, just as Saucer-Eyes told you."

"I wonder if the judge is as wise as he thinks."

"A lot wiser than you think. He sees through things."

"I don't get it."

"Didn't he tell you that old 'Heap' might give Bear the double-cross. Well he has."

"Double-cross Oh me! I thought the judge had a tickle in his throat. How did you find out?"

"Oh I hop about a bit." Bear's in a tough spot."

"Belikana wonders if he has what it takes."

"When a good fellow is in a tough spot, there's no time to wonder. Why not hurry and give him some carrots? That's something in my language. Ta ta, I'll be seein' you."

Belikana pondered. Bear had been a friendly fellow so went the myths. Further, he was once a mighty warrior. Belikana hoped he would be one now. Why not give him some 'Carrots'—*honey* that would be 'carrots for the Bear.

SO INTENSE was Belikana's meditation he did not notice the passing of his temporary blindness until he saw the storm was over. Twilight was fading to the dust of evening. There was no time to spare in getting to the council fire. Well posted on world affairs he could speak with authority. He arrived in time to hear the Chief address the council. Big Bison sought his goal in his own way.

"Big Bison has told of stranger, Belikana. He did no eat for four days. He alone received sign from Great Voice. He get many herbs—make my people well—make Good Medicine. He asks nothing from my people. Big Bison believe him see with eyes greater than Eagle with white head. So, me think Belikana, Jossakeed—prophet. But Big Bison always take counsel. He will not make people take stranger as *shaman*. Let him who no take him as shaman, speak!"

A protesting voice arose, (it was not Black Arrow). "This stranger is not important. Some of Big Bison's people are. Stonemen are very important. He-Hides-His-Eyes who speaks and others, are very important. But we do not have voice with people of Big Bison. We have little corn—little meat. Stonemen have Heap Big Chief. *He* divide meat. *He* fair. Make Stonemen very happy. He show people in land of Chipmunk how to be happy. Chipmunk people join Stonemen people. All very happy. He shaw people in land of Mouse how to be happy. Mouse people join Stonemen people. All very happy. He make

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

peace talk with big Bear. Smoke peace pipe. All very happy! Now! Me say people of Big Bison join people in land of Stonemen. Then all be very happy."

Some loudly shouted approval. Big Bison remained silent. Then one of Big Bison's tribesmen arose. Said he, "Me have little corn, little meat, little wampum, but me can speak! People in land of Stonemen no can. Me *know!* Me come from land of Stonemen. Big Bison rule most speaks all same alike. Chief of Stonemen speaks and they *do*. Me no like to join Stonemen."

Many clamored to speak. The third one recognized, could no longer restrain himself, "Black Arrow speaks. He always speaks words of wisdom. People in land of Chipmunk and land of Mouse are very happy, and . . ."

Many voices crying "No! No!" forced Black Arrow to orate in brief, "Big Bison's people are divided and will make fight. Much blood will flow!"

The heavens roared in thunderous wrath. The meeting had taken a bad turn. To talk adequate defense, would now be useless. Turning to the stranger Big Bison said:

"Belikana may give us wise council. Let him speak."

He arose and raised his arms and eyes in supplication, "Oh Great Voice, You have spoken, guide my tongue that I might give wise counsel." Motionless he stood, until the stillness was like deep water. Lowering his arms, he fixed his eyes, first on one, and then on another, as he spoke, "Did Mouse and Chipmunk offer themselves as food to War Wolf willingly? Does one Mouse and Chipmunk assuage the hunger of War Wolf? Do these drops of blood but fan the flames of hunger? Does not War Wolf seek more meat with every added morsel? Will not War Wolf grow stronger, yet remain War Wolf?" There was a seething of confused muttering, but the stranger quietly continued. "How can people of War Wolf be happy with great numbers? May be they think slaves would make them happy? Is it not better in light of Sun Father than in cave? Is it not better to travel to land of Blue Sky than to live in cave of War Wolf and eat that which War Wolf chooses to give? Has not the Bear who did trust, been knifed?"

Big Bison's eyes popped at this news, as Black Arrow sprang to his feet in the ensuing bedlam and rushed over to Belikana squaring himself and shouting, "Belikana—jossakeed!—*shaman?* Heh heh! Black Arrow makes Good Medicine to heal wounds of people which come in ways of peace. He would not have them suffer that he might fatten himself upon their wounds." He hesitated. The eyes of Belikana snapped but he spoke not. Black Arrow continued, "Belikana would have good people war yet would not fight himself — coward." With this, he slapped Belikana smartly across the face. The council grew tense. A good fight would be welcome. Many who were neutral doubted seriously whether Belikana was even a man, let alone a prophet.

ONE figure quietly stepped forward. He carried a medicine bag of unwieldy size and a hammer shaped pipe. In taking a place in the front row, he raised the pipe holding it to show an open palm. Black Arrow became completely at ease; he had proven he was master of his rival. As a coward would not fight why not show what a superior man he, himself, was, and thereby gain a host of new adherants? He-Who-Carries-a-Bag handed over the pipe. Black Arrow took it smiling and said, "Black Arrow slap Belikana to prove

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that he is a coward but Black Arrow does not hate him. He does not strike a 'squaw' unless to teach her. Black Arrow has welfare of Big Bison's people in his heart. Belikana can do no good. He should go!"

There was faint protest. And an unhealthy number shouted, "Yea!" Black Arrow was pleased. He said, "Big Bison's people's wishes are his rule. They speak that Belikana should go, but me would have him go as friend so me hold out to him the Calumet of Peace."

Big Bison wondered for the moment whether he hadn't bet on the wrong horse. Belikana must have been asleep on his feet—at least his mouth was open when something as soft as a tissue football struck the back of his head. Those within the paper spheroid were not soft. They were fiendish in their aerial attack—hornets striking in all directions at Belikana's head. Belikana's reactions were not surprising. He moved to brush them from his face and cover his eyes. He was seeing through his fingers yet he did not walk. Big Bison noticed this. Black Arrow took advantage. He drew a formidable knife; ran a light finger along the flint; pressed his thumb to the tip, and laughed. He flourished it—shadow-boxed—gestured slashing of a throat—stabbed thin air with trip-hammer precision, whooped and yelled to further terrorize and gain supporters. If Belikana showed a sign of fighting, Black Arrow's followers would have to wager much to get a little wampum. Belikana did not move. His hands still covered his eyes and the hornets were still bizurk. Strangely they bothered Black Arrow not at all. With his hands upon his hips he leaned backward, yelling, "Belikana jossakeed, receiver of sign from eagle—liar—coward!" Then with tiger demon fury he lunged at Belikana but—somehow Belikana was not there. Black Arrow was truly upset by getting off balance of his own free will through malice aforethought. His opener had been fast. Belikana's defense had been faster. Black Arrow's rejoining gesture was black lightning! It was cunningly conceived, perfectly timed. He swung as if to slash off Belikana's scalp for souvenir. Naturally Belikana ducked, but not low enough to save the eagle feather in his hair. Down it fluttered and with the ecstasy of a lunatic, Black Arrow spat upon it. This was the last straw—the venom of a spitting adder. No eye could follow Belikana as he stripped for action and suffered even more, the persistant onslaught of the winged devils. He had no weapon. None was offered him. In his heart he sought his gods. An ear stinging report with blinding light through the doorway brightened the inner wall. Cupped ears had heard his prayer. And across his mind there flashed the thought of Ioskeha of the Hurons. He had used an odd instrument of battle and as the gods would have it, there was a decorative brace of them on the long-house wall, a leaping distance from him—*staghorns!* He sprang and ripped one free gripping it between the brow and bay tines. Its weight was not what he had hoped.

Big Bison's eyes grew wider. With understanding fervor, the old chief shouted, "Ioskeha." Even through Big Bison, his gods had spoken. It was time for him to speak, "Belikana cares not for himself He wishes to do no harm to any man. But he has a mission to fulfill. He *has* received sign from eagle with white head. Black Arrow insults symbol of Great Voice. Weapons must decide. Sacrifice shall be with blood!"

The pitch of excitement flamed! The contestants stood ready. This would be something different. Knife against

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

knife was not new; nor hatchet against hatchet; nor club against club or knife —all had seen such in war. But a knife against a crooked antler with no sharpened tines or crockets, *was* something! The crowd pressed close—for the hornets had vented their spleen. Without a hand clasp the contestants closed on one another—formidable knife against a weak and awkward weapon. But that horn was disconcerting as the legs of a chair against a lion. The prongs coaxed in completion 'keep your eyes on *me!*' So Black Arrow did not know which one to keep his eyes on and feared them all. They moved forward and backward to the right and to the left. Every time Black Arrow rushed for close contact he had to close his eyes and retreat. Suddenly Belikana lowered his guard too much and Black Arrow seized the opening, but he did not reach Belikana's heart. His left arm took a wicked glancing slice. A gratifying scarlet trickle gladdened Black Arrow's followers. With greater gladness to give first blood, Belikana showed all his wound and cried, "This—for *the gods!*" Now he decided to give the fans their money's worth. He had not thus far tried the antler offensively. It seemed too light in weight to strike with telling force. To raise it high enough would open his guard too much. Thus he pondered as the two sparred, plunged and parried. Once Black Arrow rushed too hard. He ran his cheek against the antler's foremost prong but from the scratch no blood did flow. It was disappointing. Every muscle in both lithe bodies were in action, the one combatant certain of his knife if he could get close enough. The other battler satisfied if he could wear his opponent down before loss of blood and hornet poison might weaken him too much.

This he knew very well.

BUT Belikana was growing light of head from bleeding. He could not place his feet just where he wished to. His strength to move about was gone. His wits were his last reserve. He opened his guard to expose his heart. Black Arrow took the bait and plunged too straight. Somehow his trusty pointed weapon became entangled with staghorn prongs. They twisted too quickly for him!—the knife clinked on the hard stony floor. Then there was a short flashing downward stroke of the horn upon Black Arrow's left ear. It clinked and clinked again as did the knife upon the hardened ground, but, no blood flowed where that ear belonged. It was like unto flint itself.

How the mystic charlatan escaped, nobody knew. With the hilarious disorder ensuing — who cared? Who looked after Belikana's welfare? Well, who would?—(Of course with Big Bison's assistance.)

The wound in Belikana's arm became infected. In a moment of consciousness, he called for tobacco. It should be powdered and pressed into the wound. Crude as it sounds, it was effective. Not long thereafter, recuperation seemed enhanced with restful sleep—but Belikana's eyes greater than the eyes of the eagle with the white head, were traveling far: A creature with a missing ear returns to his people—strange ones, and of three types, though by their moving spirit branded as one—kindly ones of flesh and blood compelled to do what the Big-Think ordered and forced to the darkest recesses of the Stonemen's cavern,—creatures as of flesh and blood yet of stone within, who could assume at will and without shame the form of the third and strangest type of all. Creatures much taller than their fellows, their body members *rock*, grey, dull, grotesque, repugnant giants, clinking

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and grinding at every mystic joint; voices unearthly as they themselves, rasping cavernous as from within huge granite urns. Belikana cupped his clair-audient ears and furrowed his invisible brow to understand what any one was saying. Yet by bits of words and gesture, it was plain that Black Arrow unblushingly bedecked himself with a super glorified war bonnet. Hosts of admirers roared at his pugnacious gestures and war-drummed at every audacious rant. To hear him tell it, he was the lone hero, against as many as he had fingers and toes. Half were slain outright. The rest were fortunate to save their lives. What weapon had he? Only his trusty flint—he showed a gratifying stain upon it! To think! This, against countless arrows, knives, tomahawks, clubs—all mere 'feathers'! How did he lose an ear? Impertinent question to ask of an invincible one! Away with the traitor! Yet, he would explain,—a trifling matter—He intended telling of the amusing incident anyway. In the middle of the harrowing battle, he tripped! In the fall, his ear struck the horn of a stag, recently slain. (None had even heard of a stag in many moons, yet the Big-Think had inferred to the contrary.) So 'Doubt not him, but thy self!" thought they, and dutifully doubted themselves — wistfully hoping, of course, to find no one else who had seen even a track of a stag since Hector was a pup. Belikana gathered this from whispered mutterings and the shaking of heads. No! Black Arrow would not lightly push aside the fear of staghorn—for, he a god in his own black light, had lost an ear from it. Belikana made mental notes—Staghorn for defense. For offense, he would make Bad Medicine—'staghorn psychosis.' (Propaganda rampant, would have to serve for the genuine article, of which, there was none.)

FOR the moment the fear of staghorn was dulled by the intoxicant of self praise steaming from the Stoneman chief—it was as hashish to them. They would do his bidding. Run bizurkin legions for him. Belikana sensed this. Black Arrow felt sure of it. So when he demanded stupendous pressure against the sorely wounded Bear, the mighty hunters stood ready. He would make dramatic issue of the move. Black Arrow would save all from the giant furry menace. It would be butterflies in the eyes of Big Bison's people. They would sleep in their security and would be easy prey when the time came. Belikana felt sympathy for the Bear. What Good Medicine he could make, he not yet knew. He felt great concern for Big Bison's people. For if the Bear was lucky enough to reach his lair, he had to die from wounds or starve or—take to the sky as way of escape. The latter was the tale of jossakeeds — in time of cold Bear walked in the sky. In this event, an unexpected shading of the Sun Father's shield would be a threat to their life. Belikana had reasoned well though not quite far enough. For, no sooner had the Stonemen warriors started, than Black Arrow himself departed for the Place of Cold whereat Great Heads roamed. These bodiless riders of the storm blown along by their billowing growth of hair might be induced to become sporadic raiders. There was a 'zero hour' in truth, and not far off. The vicious plan roused Belikana from his vision. He took a deep breath with his eyes closed to avoid the distraction which seeing might cause. He had much to do . . . . He had to plan the doing. He must help the Bear. He must urge Big Bison and his people to prepare against the cold to come. He must speed the making of weapons. He must secure all

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

staghorn within the village, and, himself, divide it. Each man, woman and child within Big Bison's rule must have a bit. Lastly a ritualistic dance to the Sun Father for protection in the days to come, must be arranged.

With his eyes still closed, Belikana sensed a warmth of hands that had been cold. First he thought "The Sun Father warms them as Belikana thinks of him." But a warm clean delicately scented breath, dangerously near, opened his eyes to reality. He tried to close them quickly. His timing was wretched. She withdrew her face and released his hands even more gently than she had been covering his. With casual indifference she said, "Belikana sleep long time! He much well now?" He wasn't sure about his heart. It wobbled and pounded badly in all directions. He hoped to motivate a reinactment of the scene. Closing his eyes he trusted to luck. In a weak half whisper he said, "Belikana very tired." He sighed. He moved his hands about aimlessly, massaging the blanket. But —'No soap!' Her little hands did not cover his. She merely said, "Belikana see too many butterflies already."

"May be," he remarked meekly. His hope was still a jump ahead. This was as it should be for the urgency of the moment was great. Chikeesikiss did not read his thoughts when he asked, "Are we alone?"

"Many - ears - outside - can - hear," she gasped with triphammer catches of her breathing.

"Belikana wishes we take long walk, but he not strong."

"You no need take walk. Chikeesikiss help you to Big Bison's canoe when no one look. Chikeesikiss paddle. Belikana ride. Yes?"

Her features were aflame—dangerously so! Surely she was a godess. The Moon Mother had never been so radiantly beautiful. He protested not. With her assistance he lumbered to his feet and when the coast was clear, he leaned upon her arm, making an unsteady way to the creek shore. With one heave she pushed her father's canoe half way into the water and commanded him in and down. He felt very foolish but he obeyed. Slumped in the bow, facing her was uncoventional though comfortable —an optic feast!

From the air came the twitter of night birds, the hum of winged insects. Two little clouds, white and black—sandflies and No-see-Ems—blotched the sublimity of the Earth Mother arrayed in her finest. Chikeesikiss brushed at the flying pests so gracefully it seemed she would not even kill such ones as these. Belikana whacked with malice aforethought. If he could only be at the other end to shoo them from her lovely face.

As the canoe glided by the outskirts of the village, the pesky little clouds disappeared, leaving the grandure of twilight to them. It was then that the precise stroke of the paddle opened the musical well-spring of her soul. With her eyes piercing the distant vapor arrising from the water, Chikeesikiss hummed a strange chant. It became a more teasing puzzle to him when her lips moulded the music into words. Had she improvised he wondered?

"In beauty I glide,
With beauty before me, I glide,
With beauty behind me, I glide,
With beauty above and about me,
I glide,
It is finished in beauty,
It is finished in beauty."

THE moment of silence which followed was Nirvana to them.

"Moon - Mother - could - no - make - song - so - like bird." If he intended to speak aloud it was surely alright with

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

her. If it was not his intention, the unintentional was perfect. Whichever the case she had a right to carry on. Her eyes twinkled as she casually remarked, "Chikeesikiss know she no sing like bird, but Belikana no talk, so Chikeesikiss think may be she can make Good Medicine like butterfly for Belikana." By all his gods, his hope was a day's long walk beyond his reach. Further she had let him know it plainly. Hadn't she sung, "In beauty *I* glide . . *I* glide" . . . Never once *We* glide. He was nothing but a dumb nitwit, non-descript who know not from whence he came or whither he was going. With great misgiving, he ventured, "May be Chikeesikiss think she glides alone when she sing but Belikana was seeing no butterflies. Him was in canoe, too, and him saw more beauty than Chikeesikiss."

"You could no see *more*."

His heart urged him on, even though all the feathers of a thousand eagles would not have given him courage to look into her face.

"Oh! Yes! Belikana saw all beauty Chikeesikiss saw, and, too,—" Belikana choked. His words remained an unfinished symphony of affection.

A strangling smoke blowing lazily athwart the canoe had throttled the words of his heart. These precious words might have been spoken yet the fact remained he did not say them. The vile pungent stench had lashed him from forgetfulness of his mission. An evil, infinitely worse than the smoke was strangling all good ones like Big Bison's people. His mission was to do away with it.

There were tears in both their eyes but not all her tears were caused by a smouldering pile of carrion refuse without the village. In a dreamy despairing whisper she said, "This was no land of Blue Sky, even if Chikeesikiss think it so." The thought cut deeply. Yet it hurt him less than what his courage commanded him to say, "Where Earth Mother is, the land of Blue Sky is not."

"Chickeesikiss know it much now."

Calm acquiescence displayed itself in the paddle as it silently dipped and again. Its rhythm urged Belikana to continue, "But where Earth Mother is, may be Chikeesikiss will work with Belikana to try make many good people would think it Land of Blue Sky?"

This was a stimulant, "Belikana, he make Good Medicine!" The pressure on the paddle was sudden and powerful. Belikana's chin thumped his knees. Rubbing them, he remarked laughing, "May be Good Medicine for Chikeesikiss, but heap quick Bad Medicine for Belikana."

Valuable time had been lost. He had a mission to fulfill! "Will Chikeesikiss stop paddle?" Of course she would. She spiked the soft creek bottom ooze with the blade. It held as an anchor. Then he whispered:

"Belikana saw much while sick. His eyes and ears go far. Belikana know Chikeesikiss no tell." As if to hear him better she crawled forward holding fast to the handles grip, and far enough so that with a little effort he might press his own hand over hers, (if he so chose.) He saw. He chose to help her hold yet his hand grasped below her own. Thus he held to his mission and quietly told her all he had seen.

"Chikeesikiss may be now see staghorn is Good Medicine for Big Bison's people. Belikana need all so can give small piece each one people. But, how can get?"

Chikeesikiss frowned. Her finger nails were sacrificed for ways and means. It was a harder nut to crack than Belikana realized.

"Belikana not know staghorn gone!"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Alarmed he asked, "Some people steal 'em?"

She nodded, "Must be, gone quick after fight. Guess Belikana know very little staghorn in village."

"May be some, —?"

"May be, but how get 'em?" for inspiration she resumed docking her nails. Belikana grew concerned.

"Chikeesikiss better hold paddle with one hand." Laughing, she awkwardly crossed her left hand over the paddle. Not easy to hold that way, she grasped the handle so close to his hand that, for his mission's sake, he wished he had worried less about the nibble on her nails. Yet, somehow the manicure conjured the nuculus of a plan. Literally, she beamed,

"Chikeesikiss got think! Listen! Afraid people would like staghorn for shield. And Stonemen still hiding here would like steal staghorn away. Chikeesikiss think Belikana may not know who took 'em!"

"Belikana not know, but must get! How can?"

"Belikana remember story of jossakeeds about bones and things like bones? Remember sometime maybe Belikana see bones of bison set round and round? (her free hand made a circle) Well jossakeed say,—Sometimes bisons hop spring up alive from bones. Spirit he live in all bones. Belikana get think what?"

HE SAW! Wildly enthusiastic, he grabbed her free hand in both his own, "Belikana always had faith in Chikeesikiss." His truthful fervor added a decided tingle to his circulation. He outlined his scheme, building on her foundation of a legend.

"Belikana would start talk, he is making Bad Medicine so all stags will jump up alive and kill 'em, who stole staghorn! So thieves better be quick, bring 'em back before 'em work! Yes?"

She agreed whole heartedly and asked, "But how Belikana start talk?"

"Oh Belikana go inside of tepee tonight and make much Bad Medicine talk. Chikeesikiss hear him. She tell secret to some squaws who know no can keep it. Talk then run away like grass fire!"

"Yes! and may be better say 'Better bring 'em staghorn back quick to council lodge. If squaws no know bones story me tell 'em!"

"Staghorns will come back," Belikana chuckled. Bones were to rattle and ghosts to walk.

Holding her hand had been so spontaneous, Belikana did not realize he held it until she jerked it free to listen. A sound so faint, so distant, so new, had moved her hand for the hearing of it clearer—a strange and awful roar. He too listened.

"Yes Belikana hear, it is voice of Heap Big Bear in great pain. Stonemen hunters seek to kill him. It was to be. Much must be done and *soon!*"

Quickly though not rudely, he seized the paddle, wrenched it free from the silty muck and insisted he could guide the canoe down stream.

Curious to learn Big Bison's progress in awaking his people to impending danger, Belikana asked, "Are people making many bows and arrows?"

"People talk much. Make little. Big Bison no like it!"

"Belikana no like it either," he commented. She added no word. He grew equally introspective. Each conjured pictures of the future. When the canoe was beached, *her* abstractions took maternal form: By all his sacred charms he promised he would keep his blanket about him and assured her he had not overtaxed his strength. About to take their separate ways to avoid suspicion, he grasped her hand again

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in both his own, whispering.

"Sometime Belikana try to do so good for Chikeesikiss but he feel he no never can do so much."

He straightway sought Big Bison and she, the women. The Chief, beside the fire in the open, was saying little—listening much. Belikana listened much, too, before making his presence known.

Chikeesikiss was right. People talked much. Evidently made little. Debate was loud and hot between warriors and craftsmen over many things. Women near by, noisily differed, in matters, agricultural. Belikana chuckled at hearing the old Chief end an argument with his own;—"Big Bison say if no can get flint for points, then get stone for clubs. If no can make clubs, then make shields and canoes. If no can make these, then make learn to run. Little talk is good. Much is little wind. Little wind is weak. No can blow Stonemen away. No can knock 'em down. Little wind has weak back. No coward can ride away on him. And so—little wind is nothing. But little *Do* of each Big Bison man is *MUCH!*

The fiery candle of male debate was snuffed. But the tug of the women on two big bones grew hotter by the minute,—Dances to honor the Bird of Thunder would surely induce him to be overly generous with showers of pollen and rain for the new corn! No! That was not the way! Nothing worked so well as a barefoot walk in the nude about the corn patch in the dark of night. Chikeesikiss listened long enough. Gesturing silence, with all meekness she asked, "Why not all squaws no do both?"

Then, there was a very restful silence.

It was time now for Belikana to make his presence known. With the jerk of a thumb he drew the Chief to one side. He recounted his vision and informed him of the plans afoot. The survivor of many winters said nothing until Belikana had finished. Then he grunted thrice, smiled hearty approval and knocked the ashes from his pipe.

To hasten his 'act' Belikana hurried to his own tepee. There cloistered, he featured fantastic frills and flourishes in a ritual, mystic; to War Wolf, the god,—Bad Medicine to thieves.

Chikeesikiss took her cue. She saw the light within. Heard weird howls to the hellish god of War. Appeals to him to give life to bones and things like bones, that they might buck and bite all thieves who stole 'em! Chikeesikiss screamed, waited for Belikana to stick his head out; then ran madly to a few good neighbors with wagging tongues.

THERE were many softly-treading reasons why neither of the plotters could sleep soundly. One old squaw swore the ghosts of panthers sulked by night. Her aged warrior spouse, having misplaced his eagle feather insisted (with fingers in his ears) it could not be. So here, there and over yonder peaceful slumber suffered.

As the Spirit of Light invaded the eastern sky there were none, but two to see 'him.' These two were curious. Each collided with the other at the door of the council lodge. Though startled, they giggled, and as of one breath, said, "Me think staghorns may be many."

The dog paradise was, in amount, abundant; in quality, questionable; in variety, voluminous. Had the spirits in these bones and things like bones, sprung to life, they could have stocked a zoo. As the plotters sorted, disappointment grew. In the digging, once only, did Belikana show interest. A necklace!—Claws of a grizzly, sharp and menacing. She knew better than to ask him why he found value in it. At

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

last, in the lowest layer to the ground, they found pause to thank the god, so expedient in his 'boost.' But pitifully few were those horns of stag, returned by thieves; not timid souls who sought to be safe, not sorry. Belikana took official charge of the precious trophies. The remaining biological species, might have a use, he thought. There were signs of life about. Much for him to do. With the horns and necklace in a blanket, Belikana hurried to his own tepee. There, stored them. Next he sought Big Bison's knowledge of his people—an exact census of all men, women and children within the village. The Chief wrestled with the problem until his hair become tangled with much scratching. Then he appealed to youth by shouting to his daughter. She had anticipated the coming of the question and calmly handed over a sizeable bag filled with pebbles.

"These stones are as many as Big Bison's *village* people." Turning to her father as if to gain official sanction for sacrifice of their own protection for the welfare of the public, she asked, "Is that no well."

"It is heap right," Big Bison answered putting his arm about her proudly—yet hoping that Belikana would not overlook her safety and that of the twins. Belikana said nothing, but in their presence he put four more pebbles in the bag.

Within the seclusion of his wigwam, he went to work, marking and dividing, piece for stone until the bag was empty. Tiny bits they were, excepting four brow-tine prongs, a trifle larger than the rest—Big Bison's family group would need more courage and protection than all the others. When the peoples courage weakens, unflinching bravery of their leaders, must survive. To her he gave the choicest of the 'dagger points' and he cautioned her never for a single moment, to be without it. One pebble, he tossed away. Likewise he distributed the remaining three fragments to Big Bison and the twins. The peoples lot he gave to Chikeesikiss and suggested that her buck-some girl friend Laughing Mountain be appointed official checker. For each bit of horn transferred, she should take a pebble from the bag; thus there could be neither error or complaint. To traitors, these mystic bits would have no value, but Hell's homing pigeons, tarred with terror; were sure to carry unhappy tidings — Bad Medicine — the tumble-weed of fear, to roll far and wide, blown by winds of fact and rumor.

To Big Bison's people, a tiny bit of staghorn embedded in a warrior's club would add undreamed-of power to it. A midget shield adorned by a thumbnail scrap should well protect a Redman giant; and, should man or woman carry neither club nor shield, there was the parfleche in which to hide a staghorn charm.

WHEN the last bit was handed over and the last pebble tossed away, Chikeesikiss worried greatly — Had Belikana provided for his own protection? He carried neither club nor shield. What charms were within his own parfleche were *his* sacred secret. If he had thoughtlessly failed to count himself, he would evade a question on it. It would be useless to divide her staghorn bit for she possessed no all-high power. Thus she reasoned to the conclusion she m u s t learn the truth through some ruse of her own devising.

Chikeesikiss's face betrayed her mood. Laughing-Mountain wondered why it sobered. She told her it was nothing that anybody had done. Her father noticed her gloomy manner and spoke to Laughing-Mountain about it.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Both badly worried, sought the 'doctor' —Chikeesikiss needed help. He did not tarry. He came too rapidly, tripping twice over his own agile feet. Each time he fell, it required repacking his burden of professional impedimenta—oodles of herbs, a dozen splints, flint scalpels (assorted), and mystic paraphenalia sufficient for a crystal gazer telling tales to gullibles. In brief, despite delays, he arrived at the side of his patient in nearly 'nothing' flat. He was the one excited, not she. She was neither comatose, nor in convulsions. Rather, she was calmly working at a loom, but her face looked drawn to the 'doctor's eyes. Her hands trembled in the weaving of a blanket for some nitwit whose name she would not give him. She was even irritable when he asked her. This sudden change in manner betokened illness, surely. Could it be a matter of the heart. Who was this nitwit? Thus did Doctor Belikana ponder as he watched in fascination the gorgeous color sceme unfold. How beautiful he thought if she found strength to finish it. He saw the odd cross symbol of the Morning Star, and too, the figure of the Great Dark Bird. And *now,* she wove in, a tiny hole—odd freak, it had a meaning. Oh yes! That would let the Spider Woman out. It was all so full of meaning, yet what it meant, in toto, could not be told. To tell would threaten blindness to the weaver. But she should not work—she was not well! If her care of him had been the cause, the more reason she should stop. He was strong of will and he so willed. He commanded her to quit! With reluctance she obeyed. Her hands and face were warm but not too warm. The beating at her wrist seemed regular—perhaps a trifle fast. Her food had been good food, the same as given him. About her temples and her forehead only, did he note a warmness greater than he thought it should be. Dampened leaves, thereon proved worthless. She had no headache, yet the heat persisted. "Strange", he thought, "No herb Belikana knows, can help. Some demon is within her head. Must have him out! May be if Belikana paints with sand, he will come out. Belikana shall gather many sands, white—blue—red—black—yellow. If no can find sand, must find powders or other things. Must work quick! Chikeesikiss no well."

He rushed the gathering of the stuff and with his *unskilled* hand, poured a picture on the floor—an evil awful creature, for such, this demon must be. Urging Chikeesikiss to be seated in the framing circle of his picture, he touched the demon's head with a feathered wand, erasing it; then the forehead of Chikeesikiss. No soap!

"Must do more" he thought. He brushed up his entire work of art, walked east with the pot-pourri of colors and poured them to the North. Again, no soap! He reproached himself for employing a mystic remedy he did not fully understand. One last resort remained — the mystic charms within his own parfleche. He helped his little patient to her blanket. Requested her to close her eyes as he prepared Good Medicine—he hoped. Upon the floor and near her head he spread his sacred charms and with song and prayer he implored his gods for divine assistance. Chikeesikiss slowly rolled her head as his prayers continued, "Gods do hear! She move head to set free demon torment! That is what he thought, but not the reason for the motion.

Flat upon her balsam mattreed blanket Chikeesikiss could see little to one side even if her eyes were open. But if she rolled her head from side to side, and far enough, she could see

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

much in just one snap-shot blink. This she did. She saw four things, an eagle's feather, a ball, a splintered staghorn (???) bit, and last, the lock of her own soft hair securely bound with sweet grass! Her man-god was fortified! Her hair was precious—*sacred!*

SHE longed to sing, to dance, to laugh! But not too soon lest haste breed suspicion. How slow it seemed he was in returning the mystic charms to the keeping of the parfleche. He knew he failed again—but he hadn't! Suddenly she opened her beautiful eyes, spoke to him, smiled, laughed, sang, until Belikana joyfullly inferred he had over done his work. At this happy moment, poor old 'dad' and Laughing-Mountain, both thoroughly winded, trailed in, a trifle upset perhaps, in missing the miraculous cure—(Could it be, a bit disappointed, she wasn't as ill as they thought.)

Laughing-Moutain was flabbergasted, the chief not so. They had been victims of a swindle and parties to it. In a gasping breath, he whispered in Laughing-Mountain's ear. "Chikeesikiss she sick like possum, he dead."

Bewildered, although happily convinced of the speedy efficacy of his hidden tutelaries, Belikana gathered up his drug-store and departed. There were other urgent matters on his mind which should wait no longer. One concerning the mass of bones which still remained within the council lodge. Among these, were skulls and ribs bison. He knew that Chikeesikiss could direct the best arrangement for a mystic purpose. He gathered them together and sought her help in toting the first arm-loads to a prairied area without the village where bison had been plentiful. They did this boldly and curious ones offered willing hands to make light the whole work. Even He-Hide-His-Eyes was among the number and loudly did he wonder who the base thief was that stole the staghorns. Belikana had no need to wonder now. But he did wonder as to whom all the thief did rob. Some antlers surely were an aged warrior's treasures.

At the chosen site the skulls were placed around with the noses pointing in. Without the mystic ring he placed the bones remaining. Then with reverence Belikana implored the dieties of the herd to give them back the breath of life, asleep within those bones. For reasons of his own, He-Hides-His-Eyes then hid his eyes and walked away, never to be seen again by friend or foe.

Later in the day, Belikana started out upon a precautionary mission. Storms from the North, sudden and furious might spell destruction to ones, apathetic to warnings. What he had in mind was a fire to be kept burning safely, somewhere. Too, it would be a timely tribute to the Sun Father. Once white flaming arrows thrown from heaven had saved early Man from cold, but Belikana could not risk to ask his Dark Bird Friend to speak in a time of bitter cold to come, no one knew when. In Belikana's age, when wintry chill prevailed the Great Voice was still. Why he knew not. And too, the robin with the flaming breast would not be there.

Up in the hills there was a tiny cave where the Coyote dwelled. He would give Mah'ee a second chance to be a friend to Man. And so to the lair, he carried fire. Its warmth was soothing and as he drowsed. And in his dreaming, Mah'ee came to him and vowed he would win the right to carry his plumed tail high.

When Belikana awoke, he left the cave with a feeling he had accomplished one more defensive measure. On his way down to the village in a

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

patch of heavily-timbered woods, he chanced upon a hollow trunk of an old dead tree—a 'bee' tree copiously filled with the sweet of winged workers, long, long gone. What a treat for Big Bison's people! He marked the spot; the monuments, a trembling balanced boulder, and the tallest fir on the downward slope toward home. He climbed the fir high enough to be sure of bearings. But in a glimpse at a clouded sky, the Great Voice 'spoke' just once, and, in admonition. The blinding whip-like crack smote him with the thought 'Think not only of thine own'! And, he did some thinking. Humbled, he said, "O Great Voice, Belikana understands. Mystic Spirit in this nectar shall be shared with distant furry Giant battling for life. Belikana vow he will make Good Medicine and by mystic means dispatch it."

Then he hurried down to the village telling of his find. The people lost no time in bearing the sweetened burden down where it might be divided. He accepted his small portion for a most unselfish reason. He tasted not a finger sip from his own gourd cup. Quietly he withdrew from the swarm of human flies gathered about many sicky bowls. At his own wigwam he got the bear-claw necklace. In a secluded spot without the village, he dug a tiny pit and placed his sacred charms about it. Then holding the necklace and honey gourd above it, he prayed, "Oh Great Spirit who speaks through Bird of Thunder, Belikana begs that Good Medicine which he now make, shall give strength of food and strength of mighty claws to wounded Giant Bear!" He poured the honey into the pit and dropped the necklace on it, then covered both.

FOR Big Bison's people this day was done. The evening was for tall tales, song and chatter about a fire—with a word or two about defense, calling forth more boasts, more chants to ward off evil, more loud and wistful thinking. Belikana realized this merry-go-round of wind was getting no where, fast. Big Bison had warned his people as to what they ought to do, so Belikana concluded to conserve his breath. He prayed for strength to carry him through the night for he had volunteered to watch the fires of Big Bison's family group. It would not be easy.

The Bird of Thunder was about. However, there was one cheering thought for the gloomy night ahead—the drizzle would be warm, so why yet fear the hairy demons from the Place of Cold? Why watch the fire? Only Belikana's word kept him from yielding to these tempting thoughts. While others slept, the gloomy drizzle started and for partial shelter, he sat half-way within his own wigwam. The fires refueled there was nothing to do but keep his eyes on them—so easy—and—so alluring! With the warm gentle sprinkle of the drops, the fires flickered, danced and fluttered—flickered, danced and fluttered—fires flickered—fluttered—giant mystic golden butterflies flickered, danced and fluttered. Belikana, 'fire guardian drowsed; slept soundly at his post with his forehead pillowed on his knees. The few winged creatures of sunset hue became engulfed in myriads of scintillating rainbow colors—fluttering jewels of exquisite beauty. The colors darkened. Black fluttering shadows coalesced into huge swarms like bees and, these too, took form in shapes of men—shapes of traitors to Big Bison's people. Stealthy, wickedly, they moved about, quenching, smothering every fire indoors or without and worse still—stole all things with which to build one. Belikana struggled frantically to stop the criminals from taking his own good fire drill and tinder. But

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his tongue and lips could not shape words. His limbs could not obey his will. Only his strange eyes moved about and saw.

To the outskirts of the village, his uncanny vision dogged their steps until the two-faced redskin devils slunk away, taking with them the few horses which Big Bison's people owned. It was all so fantastic, it could not be!

"Belikana dreams," he said to himself. The thought that he did dream, told him he must not sleep! It spurred his will again and his will this time aroused him. The rain had passed. The grey of dawn had come. The sky was clear. The fires were truly out! Cursing himself as a worthless sloth, Belikana sprang to his feet for better view. Not a spark of fire could he see,—not a wisp of smoke. Everything was wet, wet, wet. There was not a bit of fluffy tinder, or soft dry stick, or soft dry chip in which to whirl one that it might make heat. The butterflies were the imaginaries of dreams. The fiendish acts of traitors were the facts of vision. Belikana stood transfixed with the reality of it. So bewildered was he, he did not feel a sudden chill until he scanned the surface of the creek. Its motion slowed and before his very eyes it turned to sleek steel-hard ice. The surface of all things made by man or the Great White One turned frosty, and shrieking howls as of a million starving wolves of war, pierced Belikana's ears. His hands clapped over them to shut out the hideous noise. At the instant, he could not even think. Recovering from the momentary shock that that which was to be, had come, Belikana's first thought was for *her* welfare—her father's welfare—the welfare of the twins. He started toward the tepee where she rested with the little ones.

It was a few paces distant. If he could quickly rout them out and rush them to Big Bison's wigwam, the four might stay close to one another and conserve their body heat. Thus they might survive the cold. He took no more than a step or two when the yowling eery monsters struck the outmost dwellings of the village. Belikana would have sworn he saw their dazzling long white hair roll and billow in the frigid blast, their slender wraith-like arms swoop down like silver lashes to rip, to tear tepee, wigwam, longhouse, totem, to tattered shreds, jack-straw splinters, while gruesome mouths spewed huge clouds of blinding, cutting sleet—no—not sleet, not snow, great razor chips of flint hard glassy ice!

SO QUICK the Great Heads came, Belikana was lifted and thrown sprawling through the entrance way. There was no time for whys and what-for's. Like a mad gorilla he swept the three he hoped to save, close to him—then pulled — jerked — pushed and jammed them out of doors and over to Big Bison's wigwam, and close to the trembling half-roused befuddled chief. In their ears he roared, "Lie flat! Stay close! Keep covered!" And upon the four of them he threw furred pelts and blankets—in fact, everything at hand which might make a protecting shield from cold.

For those he loved the most, he had done the best he knew. May be there was a chance to aid the nearest neighbors. He started, but failed to reach the out of doors. The mad raiders from the "Place of Cold" with one fell stroke, rolled down Big Bison's wigwam upon the helpless group. Trapped thus, it seemed they could not move—it nearly stopped their breathing.

The blow which felled Belikana, made everything go black. This soon

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

passed. He did not know how long he had known nothing. He knew that he still breathed, yet he could not breathe long. With the greatest effort, he pushed the hide walls upward and drew in a little air. The others moved. They were alive! With like efforts they made the breathing easier. Their exertions did even more than this—it maintained the circulation of their blood. None of them could tell, when the shrieking tornado wind lowered to a mournful whine —and—then, to the very stillness of death itself.

With the Great Heads gone, life seemed worth the effort. Belikana 'moled' himself forward making the way easier till all were out. Other survivors popped upward like prairie dogs in the untimely Arctic waste. They shouted in their joy of living but to endure the cold, they needed fire. Fortunately the splintered wood of many dwellings were now drying. Belikana prayed that Mah'ee had redeemed the honor of his ancient forebear. Big Bison's snow shoes were somewhere beneath the wreckage. Belikana dove under and in. The twins like all youth preferred to be in trouble. They too dove under but not in. Chikeesikiss jerked them hither by their heels. Giving loud voice to thwarted aims, Big Bison dosed them with his own choice elixir of the palm, as Belikana emerged, shoes in hand.

The going was difficult. The glow of morn illumed the sky as he climbed the last long ridge. The breeze was sharply bracing—the panther must be whining! Tears streamed from his eyes and as he glanced toward the coyote's lair, a shadow seemed to strut from the tiny cave, its plumed tail held high. If it was merely the imagery of tears, nevertheless it urged Belikana into too great haste. Suddenly he tripped and fell. With one shoe trapped in a deep crevasse, the freeing of his foot allowed the shoe to fall beyond his reach. His ankle pained him badly so he bellied forward. Within the murky darkness he forgot his pain—there were embers still aglow—and — and unburned dry twigs, neatly piled! He did not remember storing them—so the leaves on Mah'ee's family tree would droop no more. Belikana had the sorely needed fire, but he had no way to get it to Big Bison's people now.

The normal eyes of Chikeesikiss had been well trained for distance. Anxiously they had traced an ant-like speck plod slowly up the slope. Then suddenly she saw it not. Her father did his best to calm her fears. Big Bison would not admit his own. At the end of many anxious moments there was a wisp of smoke—then a distinct and single puff—then, another. Chikeesikiss shouted "Belikana find fire! Makes talk with smoke!" She waved her arms wildly in acknowledgment. "No can see so far," replied the chief. "But if Chikeesikiss raise hand for each smoke puff, me can say what Belikana talk."

The chief read the raising of her hand, the gist of the message was "Lost snowshoes, No can walk. No can bring fire down."

Big Bison had no time to send a rescue party before a second message came, in *all—too—rapid* puffs. Big Bison caught only snatches of it," See Redmen—traitors . . . Stonemen . . . Quick . . ." Big Bison lost no time presuming what he failed to interpret: There were raiders coming. No Stoneman could pass over such a wide expanse of ice and snow for their bodies were too heavy; none but Redmen traitors could be raiders in attack. Knife, tomahawk, and club could stop the worst they had to offer, yet not a moment could be wasted in call to arms and cover. The nearest neighbor,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Knife-In-Teeth, most loyal warrior was in plain sight and hearing. Big Bison snapped, quick whispered orders to pass the word along and watched his people vanish before he himself took cover with the family. Belikana abruptly smothered his signal fire. The Chief reasoned; the raiders were close by. The defenders had not long to wait. With a wild blood-congealing whoop, knives clubs and hatchets shrunk a stone ring tightly about the village. There was no sound. It was the raiders turn to guess how much resistance they would meet.

IN THIS war of nerves Big Bison's people could do naught but wait. Again came that terrorizing whoop, much louder, echoing from hill to ridge and from ridge to hill. Then there was an awful silence—deadly—evil—fiendish. In all his years of war, Big Bison had never felt his nerves so tense. Just inside a snowdrift tunnel, he could see little of the village area. He could but hope for youthful strength of arm for one last moment.

Chikeesikiss with the twins were deep within the drift and half sheltered by the wigwam wreck. If Belikana were only there! Useless wishing! She busied herself by propping of the fallen bark wall overhead. She reached for one more stout fragment of the wigwam frame when a spear point flashed through the snowdrift wall straight toward her father's outstretched form. The very tip pierced his leathern shirt. The splintered bit of wood which Chikeesikiss held parried the deadly thrust. No foil ever moved so swiftly! That was not all she did. With one terrific lurch she seized the shaft and yanked it free from him who held it. Her father made a quicker move. It seemed he shot from the tunnel's mouth and before she could withdraw the spear, she heard a moan and thump as of a body falling. Her heart was in her mouth as she crawled forward. Her fears were groundless—she found her father kneeling over a prostrate form, coolly wiping from his knife the blood of a traitor's heart—poor fool—poor bleeding bait to lure Big Bison from his hiding. Neither he nor Chikeesikiss realized their danger until the trap closed quickly—a soundless pincher movement one might call it.

As each warrior had been ordered to keep covered until a loud call to battle, even Knife-In-Teeth had heard no sound. And so, the ruse which merely cost a traitor's life, moved swiftly. Treasonous Redmen seized, disarmed, gagged and bound Big Bison and his daughter. With long raw-hide cords, they dragged them as logs of wood over the icy crust and down to the creek's shore. Its glassy surface would make the hauling easy. Only at this moment did Chikeesikiss see a crimson stain upon the breast of Big Bison's shirt. It told her much. Knife had clashed with knife before the final thrust. The old chief saw her eyes. His eyes told her that he was not badly wounded.

With a slipping sliding shuffle the raiders started off upon the mirror ribbon. Torture was their intent. The captives would tell much but the squaw might shriek in anguish. Beyond the village was a secluded spot,—this they sought. But a roar as of the Great Voice speaking and a tremble of the ice stopped their hearts from beating! It seemed the Earth Mother raged at her evil children's deeds. Yet it was not so. The mammoth balanced boulder with which Belikana marked the bee tree, was rolling down from Mah'ee's lair!

He of the eagle's feather, had seen much, thought quickly, worked fast to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The mammoth balanced boulder was suddenly rushing downward with thunderous speed . . .

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

loose it. And in its hard-packed slippery valleyed wake, Belikana 'tobogganed' down. In one hand he held a smouldering brand. In the other, a queerly crooked branch, fircated, illusory—in motion, like unto a huge stag's antler. Just as the mighty hammer fell upon the icy creek, he of buckskin, beads and feathers shouted "Ioskeha." The gangster posse froze fast with fright. Some red skins mysteriously turned an ashen grey. Big Bison saw this. Chickeesikiss too. And both saw more,—the flint-hard ice, which, though cracked, had failed to crash, now instantly gave way beneath a load greater than a dozen boulders weight. Icey waters engulfed the inhuman creatures. The creek's soft slimy bed enshrouded them in silt. While those of grey, sunk quickly, a few red skinned traitor dupes met their fate more slowly. Frantic hands clung desperately to the long hidecords. Slowly their weight drew Big Bison and his daughter near and nearer to the flint-ice jagged hole—yet, neither reached it! Belikana acted faster than he was ever known to do. Across the tilting ice he dashed and with his knife slashed both hide-cord lines.

"IOSKEHA"! Was as a cry of war to all Big Bison's braves. Cold coiled steel nerves released their power! Ice-clad coverings spat forth the Chief's savage dogs of war, all confident of staghorn power, all confident of victory, all in unity repeating the same fierce cry, "Ioskeha!"

Red skinned pillaging ghouls had not planned things this way. This was battle! He who tried to pull a bow or wield a club found an uncertain tremble in his arm and he who would, but dared not hurl a flint, found courage only to prod the rest. Of course there were exceptions. Some had the courage to hurl a flint, later finding cause to regret their action. Flints would boomerang. Yet Stonemen weapons were not all harmless. Many arrows found their marks. In hand-to-hand encounters, there were a few who placed too little faith in staghorn magic. Though brief, the foray raged with fury. And, throughout, there was a puzzling angle to it. Every hurler of a flint who became a casualty was carried away, but not so the others, although their weapons only, marked them from their vulture comrades. The would-be ghouls suffered heavy losses and fell back to safer distance. Then one came forward holding up what seemed to be a Calumet as jesture to an armistice. Belikana's discerning eyes saw it as it was. He told Big Bison. The grizzled chieftain made decision,—he alone, would give the answer. Creeping forward, he raised himself half kneeling. With his hands behind him, he sensed the balance of a large flint blade passed to him by Knife-In-Teeth. When he had the hold taught him by many wars, he sprang to his feet and shouted, "Ioskeha" yet made no further move until a battle hammer—no Calumet—whizzed pin-wheel fashion through the air and abrutly fell at Big Bison's feet. Surprise gripped the hammer hurler's arm. And truly petrified he was, when a white streak flashed forth from Big Bison's hand to sever the 'feeler' which had gestured peace. Wiser was he who had lost a hand. He did not touch, the knife, for he saw embedded within its grip a staghorn fragment. Thus ended the action of the moment. And as the brilliant shield of the Sun Father arched its fiery rim above the hills, those who would plunder the dead, moved off as if commanded to take cover. They did not yet see that there was something brighter than their own self appointed

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

deity, 'Heap-Big-Think!'

While the battle raged Chikeesikiss had not been idle. Since her rescue she had kept the only home-fire burning—the brand brought down from Mah'ee's cave. To this, she added a few precious scraps of half-dry wood, molded by the twins from beneath the wreckage of her father's wigwam.

Big Bison and Belikana were heartened by her efforts. This was no midget fire. It was Mah'ee's loyalty to man. It was survival to Big Bison's people. It was a gift, divine. No one yet should selfishly partake of its life renewing warmth. First, through united effort it must grow to a sizable blaze in tribute to the great giver of it. Slowly Chikeesikiss backed away from the tiny blaze, lest she might steal a candle-worth of its meager heat. The shining shield of the Sun Father shown full upon her face. Her lips moved. And Belikana saw her face, the pink bronze beauty of it, the humility of her emotions written there. For a few brief moments she had been a Vestal Virgin over this precious gift.

Big Bison hailed Knife-In-Teeth that he might pass the word along for a heap big fire building, where all might gather in tribute to the Sun Father and then receive its warmth. And so from many wrecks of what were homes came fuel, much of it of doubtful dryness. Yet the blaze did grow and with it the hope and faith of all. With the fire at its peak, the over hanging blanket of smoke and mist rolled away and the warmth of the Sun Father's shield gave benediction.

BIG BISON had seen Winter nod and relax his grip upon the icy lash of bitter winds: While Hiyoka drowsed the gentle warmth of the heavenly disc would urge the snow to melt, the life bloods of growing things to flow, the furred and feathered children to move about and speak to one another. Then when happy voices grew too loud in their rejoicing, the Old Man from the Place of Cold would rouse and strike a stinging blow as if to shout, "So Ye did think Hiyoka slept, ye cringing creeping crawling things! The Ruler of the Winds is ever watchful, fools! Cease thy noisome chatter! Begone cur spawn of the Earth Mother!" And under the quick freezing lash of a northern blast they would scurry to cover, there to slyly await another nod of Hiyoka's head. Thus, in fitful, fretful pattern, the soothing shimmer of the Sun Father's shield would play against the sting of Hiyoka's cruel 'cat,' until the Old Man, beaten at the game, roused no more, for many sunny days. But never once, in Big Bison's memory, did Hiyoka's lash grow limp so quickly as on this queer day born in an untimely sub-*sub-zero* cold.

The morning sky grew cloudless. By noon, the icy mantel melted. The creek rose to super-flood proportions. And before the Sun Father rested for the night, every dwelling along the shores not washed away, had been saved only by quick moves to higher land.

The evening was depressing, ghostly. Rising, writhing, twisting vapors in forms bizarre, blown by shiftless breezes and illumed through a moonlit misty veil, meandered hither and thither—shimmering wraiths hunting for a place to rest, yet finding none.

Here and there under foot, the land which *was*, was *mud*, the sticky gooey kind that grips a foot with intent to keep it,—uninviting islets, yet each, a tempting refuge from roaring waters, impromptu ponds, a vast expanse of ocean lakes where a little creek sprawled in frenzied madness. On such a black gumbo haven, a canoe was grounded with Belikana and Chikeesi-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

kiss in it. They had ferried, much and many. Neither had the strength to move. He slumped at one end. She none too gracefully reclined at the other. Said Chikeesikiss," Me think Belikana see butterflies."

"Them no butterflies Belikana see," he mumbled, "Them are *bats!* Can no see them hang on Belikana's eyes?"

She giggled impulsively at the way he spoke. Then, sensing the terror of what he said, it chilled her to the bone. Bats! Harbingers of death—the Great White One forbid that Miclanteuctli's messengers should close his eyes before her own!

Quickly leaning forward to peer intently at his face through the gruesome moon-drenched pea-soup mist, she saw no bats! For an instant a midget gremlin made her wish she had seen something like a bat that might auger a redman's version of a big green apple torment. It would serve him right for scaring her half to death. Even more, that imp of temper in her moulded by the sight of great waters snapped her eyes and wagged her tongue.

"Too bad Angont no pinch-bite your stummick." She nose-dived in an immensely satisfying pout. Even a bit of this Huron water monster's flesh was poisonous, no doubt.

He laughed. He sensed her mood and loved her more for it, but, with a mission to fulfill, he crushed all petals of romance. His eyes swept the area beyond her as he quietly remarked:

"May be no should speak of Angont, his ears may be very close. Belikana hope he no see head of Angont or may be two-head, once face Sisiutl, but may be he *did!*"

Turning to see, she gave a low frightened cry. There was good reason. Either of these water serpents was a fiend. And where the shadowy vapors seemed to spiral highest she saw a queer wriggling blend of many shapes. One did not change its sinuous, hideous, moon-painted contour. Worse, it came close, bobbing rhythmically, hissing in tune with each emersion of its huge repusive slimy periscopic head. It grew more distinct. The sky was reddening. A number of Big Bison's people on a larger islet, carefully nursed a feeble remnant of the morning blaze. Its glow reflected from the mist. The prospect for the two isolated workers, was not rosy. Their mud islet was about two canoe lengths long. The monster Angont could strike much further than across it. The creatures mood was menacing to all water craft of Big Bison's people. Unfortunately there were rafts, dugouts and canoes still plying back and forth carrying food and implements of war for safe storing. And of course a few frail craft overloaded with poor but precious belongings of flood victims. None of those afloat or on mud shores realized the peril, excepting Belikana and Chikeesikiss. Of one tongue they shouted "Angont!" For some, their warning came too late. The monster instantly submerged and struck a deadly blow with his flint-hard giant horn. Logs and cargo of a raft flew asunder as if blasted by a submarine torpedo. Two of Big Bison's people were seen no more.

KNIFE-IN-TEETH had always lived up to his name but boasted of no skill in navigation. His canoe was top-heavy with bows and arrows. Its cargo would be no small loss and Angont seemed to know it. The disaster-out blow fell. The hull crashed. Knife-In-Teeth was once more put to test. His knife was truly in his teeth when he landed in the water. None but Belikana's owl-power normal vision re-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vealed his sorry plight. His lightning reason told him Knife-In-Teeth would give battle. He knew the odds and made decision. "He can no die this way! Chikeesikiss out, Belikana go alone!" But he was not quick enough to get her out. A shove of her own paddle sent Belikana sprawling. The canoe rushed straight for the combat area. Never had Chikeesikiss dipped a paddle with such consummate vigor. Belikana had just reached his battle station in the bow when the canoe approached the monster and the *man*. Belikana's hope was that the brute might be outmaneuvered. Knife-In-Teeth seemed to have so reasoned too, for he circled carefully about the huge undulating devil. Its great bulk compelled it to move ponderously. Its head 'packed the wallop.' The wily warrior watched to close in on a vulnerable spot without taking a killing thrust of the monster's unicornish horn. Belikana shouted a suggestion, "No can cut hide! Stab eyes! Eyes!" The idea sounded feasible if he, in the water, and they in the canoe, could coordinate. A double approach, head on, of both canoe and man might stop and keep the monster headed straight. Chikeesikiss maneuvered the canoe as Belikana wished and so precise that Knife-In-Teeth caught on. The monster stopped circling. It seemed bewildered. Then, with two lightning thrusts it tried to strike each foe in quick succession. The stab at Knife-In-Teeth fell short. The canoe was not so lucky. The tip of Angont's horn sent it spinning. With super human strokes Knife-In-Teeth took advantage, closed in, and did his best to reach an eye, but, his knife, too, stopped short! Angont's huge mouth opened and viciously snapped shut. They in the canoe knew not what it meant until they saw no ally in the water. Escape from the monster's wrath seemed near hopeless but possible. Belikana would never seek safety for himself. Her protection was a different matter. "No can fight Angont alone! Make quick paddle away! Very quick!" Then she spoke, "Belikana battle!" Thrusting the eagle's feather safely in his hair, overboard he went. He gave the canoe a violent shove away from the danger zone and started circling tactics. The plan failed miserably. Angont now moved in no predictable way. The immense body gyrated right and left. It undulated in great and irregular heaves. The water boiled. The mammoth head lashed and struck like the fist of a blinded giant. This was no cool and calculating beast of the sea. It was a water devil gone stark mad. Belikana had one choice only,—to keep clear from the crazy writhing hulk, ever watchful, ever hopeful for just a chance. It came. The monster quieted. A few swift strokes brought Belikana within knife reach of an Angont eye. He raised his blade and then knew not what hit him. Chikeesikiss saw it, it was Angont's head. She shrieked as Belikana sank. She thought quickly and acted quickly. She too stripped for action and rested athwart the beam of the canoe that she might be ready to ease into the murky water when Belikana's lifeless body might come up. Her chances of getting it were less than nothing, but nothing mattered now. Small claw-winged black 'butterflies' crossed and recrossed her mind. She told herself that she and she alone sent him to his death. Her eyes, ground razor-sharp by conscience rove the swirling waters. How soon she saw his body, she knew not. With an otter's speed she swam to it and entwined her strong fingers in his hair, vowing if he sank again she would sink with him. It was not the first time she had risked her life in such a way, but the first to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The huge bulk of the monster turned slowly and laboriously moved

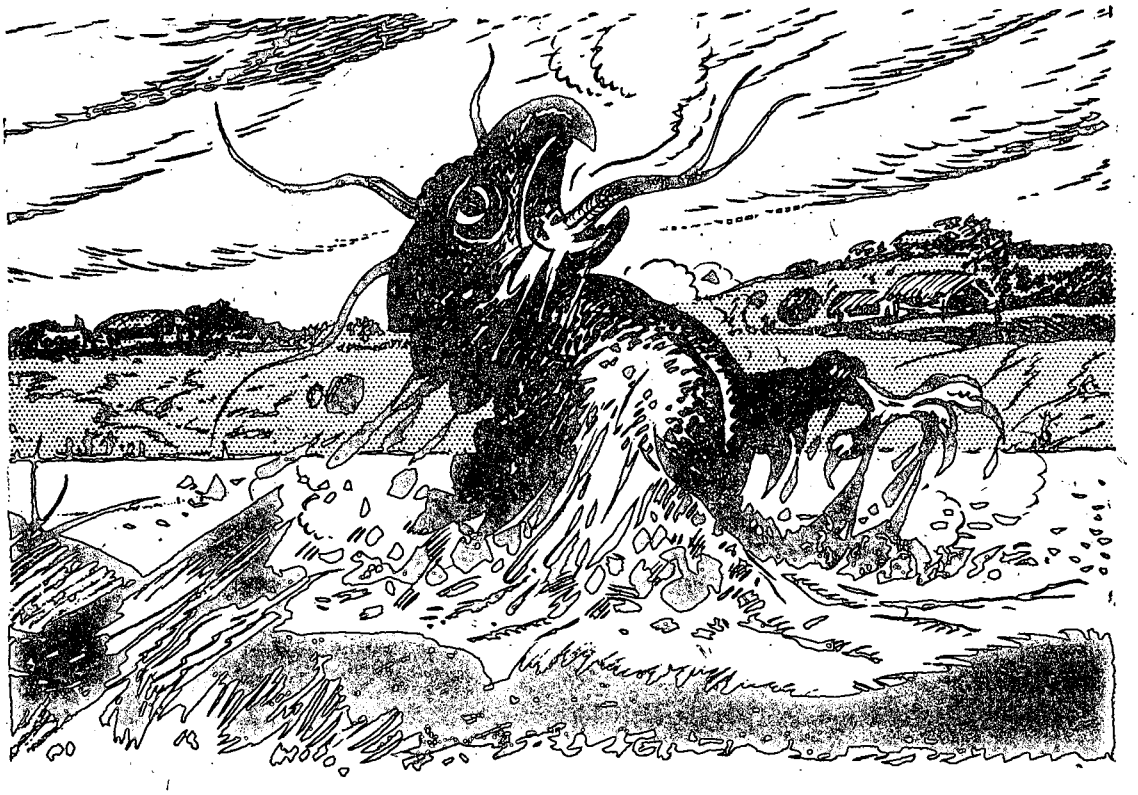
save the mere dead dust of hope.

Gradually she covered the distance to the canoe. If she could only get one of his arms over it! She tried. The god of chance tossed in a knife, Belikana's own, clutched in his fighting hand. The sharp edge hurt. It told her he was not yet dead. She grasped the wrist above the knife and worked around until their arms rested across the canoe. With short heaves she pulled him half way in. His face was down. She slapped his back until he gave an encouraging cough. She slapped him harder until she heard him sputter, "No more slap, Belikana he be good!" She pulled his knife fist to her lips. He sensed it not. The momentary consciousness had yielded to a freak of his uncanny vision. Again he mumbled, what seemed incrediable, "Belikana see Knife-In-Teeth very much alive. He try cut way out Angont, but he no can do quite. He call help. Chikeesikiss must help Belikana wake quick with slap!"

She slapped until there was no doubt of his resuscitation. Taking a few deep breaths, he gradually raised his head, "Me go, but me and Knife-In-Teeth come back, you bet!" He dove so quickly.

Angont grew wildly mad. A warrior who carried a blade between his teeth and refused to die was no *hors d'oeuvre*. He was in truth a "hot potato." Chikeesikiss grew keenly alert for Angont's frenzy seemed to double. It shook, twisted, reared and roared and with one mighty heave the mammoth head rose half its body length above the surface and then sank limply down, not dead, but sorely wounded. Listlessly the huge bulk slowly turned

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



off toward dark forbidding waters and safety from the man-things . . .

and with the flood water current, laboriously moved off toward dark forbidding waters where "blind fish" saw not the ghastly glow of a self-ordained deity of evil. Sea power had met its match.

CHIKEESIKISS was rewarded for her watchful waiting. After hauling a pair of tired battlers aboard, she chose to paddle. They could bail.

Lights had tricked the eyes of Big Bison's people. The ruddy hues from the towering fire blinded them from the outer darkness. They had heard the cry of Angont and had found much wreckage of his havoc, yet none living had seen the monster, nor was aware of his defeat. Even Big Bison's stoicism leaned inwardly to frenzy but when the trio stepped ashore with triumphant whoops, the Chief drew deeply upon his pipe. The three versions of the encounter tallied as to Angont's size and fury. However, the majority of opinions held that Knife-In-Teeth deserved all the credit. He grinned with his knife between his teeth. Chikeesikiss wondered to herself that the warrior accepted praise without a murmur. Belikana's vote had belied his thoughts. There had been no hero in that encounter, only a *heroine*. Thus the matter rested.

In the days of receding waters, there came much illness. Belikana's stock of medicine was sorely pressed. With his hope's aid in gathering herbs the cold had spared, he carried on without complaint. Some of the less resistant quietly passed to the Land of the Blue Sky. The number was fewer, by far, than thought possible. Belikana's luke-warm popularity jumped by leaps and bounds

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in matters medical, in matters psychic. But in matters of bravery in the art of war, Knife-In-Teeth had no rival. Thus came to Big Bison, a 'headache' embodied in two heroes. It involved the future of his people, and too, his daughter.

The Chief had long hoped his people would recognize Belikana as their shaman. Now, when the time seemed near circumstances brought a complication. Big Bison felt his moons could not be many. A shaman could be chief. But a chief should know well the art of war. Knife-In-Teeth knew *this*. Could Big Bison risk suggesting that 'church' be joined with the 'muscles of the state,' without offending a most loyal warrior hero?

The old man would rest easier if he knew their will. Depressing weather, depressing thoughts brought on a weakness. Belikana's herbs and such, helped a little, though not enough. Big Bison vowed he would bring the matter to a head. At a meeting of the council he feigned unusual weakness and asked both his stalwarts to assist him to the lodge, thus could they be seated by him, one right, one left, chance fixing their positions. The congenial mood of all gave the chief the needed courage to broach a touchy issue. He permitted his two 'bowers' to assist him to his feet and requested they remain so standing to steady him while speaking.

Said he, "Big Bison can no speak long. Much cold, much heat makes breath short—may be too short. So, Big Bison wishes people to speak. These are times of war, yet people seem have forgot. When Heap-Big-Think seems far off because Great Heads and Angont go, peoples sleep too much. Such is like Spider Woman's web. No see Big Bison's warriors far off, so think they are not. Forget they need corn, meat, arrows, knives, many of them. People forget. Many Redmen fools listened to loud talk of Heap-Big-Think. Such men can fall before common weapons. Big Bison pray that soon Bird of Thunder much more strong than Great Heads, much more strong than gods of sky, will strike Stonemen creatures too. But how long this will be Big Bison do not know. So he would have people make plan for long. People now must have chief strong in ways of war, wise in counsel, wise in ways of peace, so people will no more make war with one another. If Big Bison must leave his people soon, what then?"

THE venerated chieftain appeared exhausted. His aids eased him to his place upon the ground. Thus it left his dual candidates standing before the assembled council. The members had anticipated no such problem.

A young 'buck' swift of foot and fearless in the hunt, was first to break the hush. The stories he had heard of Knife-In-Teeth's exploits fanned his enthusiasm. He shouted his hero's name and others took up the cry until the name echoed and re-echoed. The great warrior raised his arm in greatful acknowledgement. And as if to give youth his fill, he gripped his flint as was his custom, drawing back his lips in a perfect pearly incisorial terrorizing smirk. Big Bison smiled and reached for slender stick extending from the fire pit. As he lit his pipe, he slyly watched his personal choice.

With all sincerity Belikana reached out his hand as if expecting nothing less for his good friend. Further he proffered Knife-In-Teeth his own flint blade. He accepted it and with blades in each hand he raised them in a dramatic gesture of full-drive warrior might, giving punch to the pose with a whoop that even made Big Bison shud-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

der. Now it so happened that Knife-In-Teeth chose to step from the spot light with a grace that marked him a true brave. He held the two blades side by side and said, "Look see. Knives are same like, Belikana make 'em. He can make many more all same like. He can make bows all same like. Arrows too. Knife-In-Teeth did make good bows and arrows which Angont destroyed! But Knife-In-Teeth he learn how from good small bows and arrows Belikana make for twins. Me just make big ones like 'em. (Belikana fidgited) More is this, me no much brave. Me just fight Angont because mad for sink canoe. All Big Bison warriors do more anytime. (Big Bison hoped this would be true *and soon.*) Warriors may wonder why he no say something before. Well it is like so. Knife-In-Teeth warrior long time. Squaw mama say him papoose teeth come see out by bite on stone knife. Well as time go by, it is, all time is not war. When no war is, Knife-In-Teeth he just Redman. May be he play like war but people no care. Even make laugh sometimes. Knife-In-Teeth sometimes wish he no bite on stone. But now beast War Wolf is chief of chiefs, so Knife-In-Teeth do just what he know. People somehow funny queer. Make much noise for him. And now may be Knife-In-Teeth funny queer too, to like noise people make. This is not good. Me no like what me know how to do. Me no Stoneman. Me is no so great brave as any Big Bison warrior who do as much yet did no bite on knife when he little papoose. But Belikana, he brave. When me inside Angont, me call for help. Somehow queer like Belikana see, hear and come to save me. He come to give life for brother. No man can do more!" With this he handed back the seer's own flint blade.

Belikana wished that he might 'tumble-weed' away before the wild wind of a shouting council. Both men for the moment were oblivious of the ovation welling from many throats. When Belikana had a chance to speak his voice was low, clear, vibrant.

"Belikana is unworthy. In all truth, Knife-In-Teeth believes himself not brave. No warrior could be more so. And sometimes when one wonders why such a Big Bison warrior, will so risk life, Belikana thinks this is the reason. It is for those that do not take part in the council meetings, those who are the mothers of Big Bison's people and those who will mother Big Bison people yet to be. Warriors risk life that squaws may live, not as slaves but as mothers of free little ones. Such is the will of the Great White One Belikana believes. His will shall survive all opposition for some high reason no Redman can yet understand. Neither does a Redman know how to honor him excepting to show homage to lesser gods in some strange way bonded to His will. Redman can hear the Great Voice speak, can find the flint-hard thunder stones thrown by his flaming arrows. Yes! The Bird of Thunder, the Great Dark Bird is. No one can doubt. So too the Earth Mother is close and do all not see the shining shield of the Sun Father, the gentle rays of the Moon Mother. To all these lesser gods we should be grateful for the many gifts of light and life. No one can deny they are not. What strange earth creature but a fool or liar would set himself up to be as they? Yet a two-head one-face Sisiutl thing far worse than any liar would, as a god, bring misery, slavery, agony and death on all Big Bison people. Against this awful would-be master of all Earth Mother's children, Big Bison rages war and Knife-In-Teeth risks all. To them owe you all loyalty and devotion."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Belikana came among you in performance of a mission. He remains to counsel and to suffer as the way of war may demand. Big Bison's mind need not be troubled. He has been and is a good father to his people. And to all the gods he has been grateful. Do not forget what a most loyal tribesman said to us many moons ago 'Me have little corn—little meat—little wampum—but me can speak. People in land of Stonemen no can speak. Me *know!* Me came from land of Stonemen! Big Bison he rule by most speaks all same alike'. That is the secret of Big Bison rule. He has, with wisdom, counseled with his people that he might *lead* them, not *drive* them. He may rest assured the one who follows him, will too, be wise and strong, yet gentle. Big Bison people would have none other as their Chief."

AN OPPRESSIVE silence was quickly broken. He who had shouted Knife-In-Teeth had found a new idol, "Belikana!" he screamed, "Belikana—shaman" the youth's ardor argued him to shout, "Belikana—Chief!" But he had listened well—his new hero would have scorned him for it. To call Belikana *shaman* was different. The title was, it seemed a key to a Pandorian pandemonium prearranged for prophet. The seer, stood speechless, flabbergasted, as a deluge of gifts poured in upon him. Feathered wands, rattles, skins of beast and serpents, masks, prayer rugs, blankets and all such as had to do with his high calling, flowed from the people's heart in a blast of whoops and laughter. How long the shaman would have stood there like a frightened simpleton, with his mouth wide open, no one could guess. A sizable bug however brought him down to earth. It was muddled by the din and sought quiet within the lipped orfice of Belikana's face. No man was in the mood to weep. Big Bison locked his hands across himself for abdominal support and when Belikana spat forth the bug, Knife-In-Teeth rolled and kicked his heels in trying to catch his breath.

Realizing that something had been happening to him, Belikana grinned a terrafirma thanks for the many gifts. Of these there was one he noticed last of all. It had been tightly rolled and deftly pushed forward in front of his feet by an aged chief assisted by a warrior who oftimes carried a knife between his teeth. This gift though last, was a blanket of exquisite beauty, with the Bird of Thunder its central feature. The air within the lodge was warm. Belikana's boyish urge to don the blanket, was far warmer. So he donned it. It gave him poise and dignity yet he was not aware of either. His sense of being clad with the affection of Big Bison's people he did feel. And he forgot not that powers greater than himself had guided him to his new station. Yet he was a very nervous shaman from the sudden appointment viva voce. He paced. With each half turn many saw the central symbol of a god so near to all, gentle, beneficent, yet powerfully retributive upon brutal evil doers denying the Supreme Authority of the Great Voice. Belikana, stamping out his nervous tension, became profuse in thanks for each gift, except one—gorgeous but too sacred to be mentioned. His wearing of it had spoken louder than all his words. However he could not resist a word of gratitude to his 'patron saint,' and, too, the glorious Eagle with the White Head, symbolic of him.

In this eventful moment, the council was in the mood to listen. A shaman's words might be more impressive than those of a mere counselor. He

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

said, "These many gifts express thankfulness to one once called a stranger. Belikana feels as he has said before he is not worthy of great honor. What power he may have, has been given him, to carry out the purpose of the Great White One. To Him and to the lesser gods, gratefulness is due. As we know not how to honor the Great Unseen, we must let our rites and dances to the lesser deities suffice. At the time of great Cold, we have built small fires and fed them to be bigger. Yet we must admit that our zeal may have been prompted through necessity, not reverence. It is timely for us to show our thankfulness through a ritual of fire, actually at risk to ourselves. Some aged and infirm have perished. We have survived. Their going impresses us with the power of the evil warring on us. At times, the Sun Father's shield seems weakened. We wish to live. So to do, we must be toughened, worthy. We must not expect our gods to do for us what we can at least try to do for ourselves, nor side *with* us against the enemy if we are unworthy. We have withstood the icy blast from Great Head mouths. What flaming tortures are we prepared to meet?" The shaman suddenly halted his restless pacing. He eyed the council. He lowered his voice to a mere whisper, "Who in counsel here, will accept this challenge to courage?"

THE response as a rising race. The youthful hero worshiper and Knife-In-Teeth tied for 'first.' Poor Big Bison, last upon his feet, nearly 'dis-Blanketed' Belikana in his efforts to be first. Belikana had a problem. Unity in courage was the thinnest shell. How not to crack the shell with envy? This was a golden opportunity to discover fearless, youthful, agile leaders, yet in the spirit of the ritual, he said, "Knife-In Teeth knows men, knows pain. Let him choose twelve who care not for the feel of flame. Each one, whitened well, shall bear a cedar fagot, circle round a central fire, chanting, dancing, pointing to it. And when the shaman whistle sounds, four bark bundles shall be lighted, one tossed toward the place of Dawn, where came b o t h Life and Learning; one, wherefrom the warm winds come; one, the way the Sun Father goes—where Man may rest; and the last, to where dwells the Polar Star—the place of Tall Green Pines. The last three torches drive out demons who bring illness. Now shall all twelve dancers light their fagots, circle round the central fire, fast, and faster, each to try and touch his leader like departed spirits, radiant with the gift of fire. So let twelve be chosen who care not for the *lash* of flame!"

Knife-In-Teeth had a problem. There were too many to fill the bill. The shaman saw no reason why the number could not be greater. Even *that* youth should not be denied a place. Thus was the active cast selected.

Belikana raised his arms. There was instant silence, more quickly stabbed by a piercing shriek, a scrambling from atop the arched roof, a second alarming cry, a mingling of angry voices, human and half human, ugly, the shout 'Ioskeha!'—feminine and threatening.

Belikana made prompt exit and reached *her* side, quicker than he called her name. How the shaman's youthful worshipping disciple took second place in egress even the lad did not remember. The youth thought he might have made his departure by stepping over, between, under, around, or on one or many council members, thence outdoors via an entrance or under a side wall, belly-flop wrigglewise. However, he was certain of one thing,—he trailed his hero by a very few paces, stopping as abruptly as he started, making no

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sound. The latter was an honest error. He had emited a terrific yelp. It was this which spoiled a scene romantic. For, Belikana had found his hope in no distress. She was of combatant mien, a bit ruffed perhaps, her hair dishevled, her eyes wide open, an upraised hand agrip a staghorn dagger, her feet most squarely planted. As per romantic custom, it was time to swoon for she had met the crisis. And, no doubt, she would not have missed a ship so good, had it not been for a yelp from a lively kid who'd placed too little faith in a staghorn bit. He'd taken the first painful taste of war from a flint's rough edge scoring across his back.

And so, romance fell before first aid, while Knife-In-Teeth assumed command as if action was in order. His questions scooped the news. A Stoneman in human form had gained ingress to the village and climbed the roof, while the council was in session. The smoke-hole afforded observation. Chikeeiskiss had not seen him until a creaking sound snared her attention to a silhouette against the moon. The creature lifted and poised a stone. She screamed to stall and draw the fire on herself. But the prowler could not see her and so sought her out only to find a vixen armed and in a mood to kill.

KNIFE-IN-TEETH made prompt decision in re: one youth, sniped, and bent upon revenge. Big Bison's seasoned veteran put a restraining hand upon the boiling budding battler. Into his ear her poured question, "When Sun Father no walk, can owl see man better than man see owl?"

This was easy, "Man see eyes of owl first."

"So sure?"

"Any Redman know that."

"If creature no speak, how know shining eyes are not panther?"

The boy dug a twisting toe into the ground. Inwardly he was insecure. He recalled no distinctive iris shapes. Knife-In-Teeth felt sorry for his pupil. He had been a boy who had learned how little he knew when he had known so much. To ease the searing pain that he must yet cause, the warrior threw an arm across the boy, asking, "Suppose that thing that walks like man whose eyes *no* glow, wait sneak-like to kill?"

The boys words came hard, "Other man must better see than panther manthing."

He looked squarely into the veteran's eyes and truly 'bailed out.' "And, me see too, if feet of young warrior move more fast than head when he have no staghorn with him, he may go way Sun Father goes."

"That is so!" said Knife-In-Teeth gravely, giving the boy a vise-like hug. Then he added, "When one surrenders, does he no give up knife?"

The youth reluctantly yielded his one and only crude treasure.

"Now get staghorn charm!" commanded his teacher. The boy did so 'and quick,' bewildered though he was.

Belikana a few paces away appeared intent upon whispered one-way converse with a young lady who refused to listen. He gesticulated pleadingly. Knife-In-Teeth saw her clap her hands over her ears. He chuckled. Belikana hadn't said a single word publicly about that blanket. He had 'blahed' about every other thing. You can visualize the Belikana—Chikeesikiss jam. Exhausted in trying to square himself, the shaman walked over to his warrior friend. He hoped he hadn't heard. The gentleman warrior let him think so.

"Me have talk with boy. He will soon be back.

"Yes, Belikana has had an ear to

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Knife-In-Teeth's good teachings."

"Will Belikana say something too?" when Knife-In-Teeth is through? The boy rushed up to say,

"Me have staghorn charm."

"It is enough to say so. If in medicine bag, no man must see. Open mouth!" snapped Knife-In-Teeth. The boy's jaw fell with a machine precision. His eyes cried "What next?" The answer, gently placed across his teeth was a flint blade, Knife-In-Teeth's very own. The jaw closed with a power which would have snapped a lesser flint. The chin was high. The warrior leader turned to Belikana. Said the shaman, "The ways of war are harder than the flint,—Knife-In-Teeth would shield his warriors well that they may not sell their own blood cheaply. From his wise teachings, this young warrior's feet, henceforth, will not set pace for head, but head for feet. With such swift feet as his, his head must lead the way with wings. Belikana has faith that 'Flying-Knife' will prove worthy of his name."

The fledgling warrior's chin tilted higher as he removed the blade to say, "Flying-Knife now knows the risk he takes, but he has staghorn. It is more than charm, more than Good Medicine, it is part of weapon of stag with which he battles. It is part of 'the together' of all Big Bison people. If Flying-Knife be tine of horn which breaks in battle, what matter? There are many tines. Flying-Knife is not afraid do die."

The shadows took him whose courage moved with wings.

The eyes of both his heroes followed him to the curtain of the trees. As if to himself Knife-In-Teeth remarked, "His head now truly lead his feet." And aloud he asked, "You know who him is?"

"*His father* came from land of Stonemen!" said the shaman, equally abstracted, "But they both are Big Bison people now."

CHIKEESIKISS had watched and listened. She hated herself for having teased her own man-god. Why a boy should take such risks, she knew not, but they knew. That was sufficient.

The night passed. Though to all, the hours seemed to moved with shackled feet. The day dawned and the Sun Father's shield moved no slower, no faster than any other day for Big Bison people. They knew how to fear; also how to forget if danger seemed not imminent. The next evening came, the great Sun dance with it, in climax cacophonous yet rhythmic with whoops and drums of war, as a martial epilogue to keep the people thoughtful. Youth had risked his all that Big Bison's people might be free. This night passed. Its hours also moved with shackled feet. A new day dawned. The Sun Father's shield shone brighter, moved slower than before. The people were jubilant. The Sun Father smiled. He had found their tribute pleasing. Belikana's teachings had been proven; the people, wise, in accepting him as shaman. Knife-In-Teeth grew exultant in the first few warm cloudless days. He pushed war parties further forward, that the people might provide more implements behind the staghorn wall. The aged Chief indulged himself by sleeping late to bask his joints in broad day warmth. Even Belikana whipped himself to keep from napping; Chikeesikiss, too. She told him so and something more disturbing. Too much water for the growing corn had become too little. Toiling squaws saw the dry crackling earth. Why had the Bird of Thunder ceased to speak? Were their gods jealous, envious, if humans showered honors on a few? Sensible questions, Belikana thought, yet his faith

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was great.

The people should honor the Great Voice in befitting rites. He alone would appeal for rain. If the Great Dark Bird failed to answer, the shaman would take the blame. And so, the chant of the Ninth Night was held in flawless dance. The intoned song of feathered maskers gave the people hope—but—no rain came.

The nights grew dewless, the days cloudless. The Sun Father's shield became a blistering torch. Corn withered, shriveled, died and turned to brown and fragile parchment. The ground seemed fire hot. The thickest moccasins were poor protections to well calloused feet. The little creek that had once sprawled with an untimely flood narrowed to a trickle. The trickle ceased. A jagged line of stagnant stinking puddles were alive with larvae of countless pests. The puddles shrunk to dust.

Belikana's burdens awaited the last straw. His medicine dwindled. Earth Mother could give no more. The Bird of Thunder heard not his pleading to stop the killing thirst of Big Bison's people. Yes, the Great Voice cursed them by his absence. The Sun Father cursed them with his daily, deadly, damning, walking because an unworthy shaman had been chosen. Could it be that there was a unity of bloods between the Sun Father and an earthly evil—not a good SISIUTL lizard, an ugly phantom with two serpentine heads and a near-human one; a vile power making humans think as devils, making them to crush and torture all Earth Mother's good peoples; an ogre, which, to kill it, must have all its heads cut off?

Belikana had reason for so thinking. Even his Good Medicine seemed powerless. The Grim Reaper's sythe swept swaths far and wide sparing neither sex, nor age, nor occupation.

The twins mummying from the withering heat, fell stricken. His hope's blood-shot eyes begged desperately—"Water! Food! Water! Can *you* no get even sacred water?" *She* had found the courage to ask so much.

"May be lake of gods do have water! Me try," replied Belikana. As he gathered chip-dry gourd flasks for travel to Creation's end, Big Bison tottered toward him, mumbling, in a parched ghostly rattle, "Belikana jossakeed, shaman! Bah! You no make Good Medicine. You make Bad Medicine! Go!" The mere gesture of command near upset the old Chief's shrunken frame. Belikana could not answer. He blamed himself.

Hours seemed days in reaching the region of the lake. Lake?—a sickening sight! No proud green-clad sentials there; just brown giant spectres propped upright in death; mummy guardians of a desert with a central puddle in it. But it was *water! ! !* The shore was dry as bone. He ventured toward the pool but the sands gave way. With a desperate lurch he threw himself backward. Quicksand!—a mote as formidable as a wide cravass, a ring designed by Satan.

Though hobbled with sickening fatigue, Belikana's unrelenting will drove him up a slight rocky overhanging bluff bordering the sandy lure of death. There he stopped for breath. Suddenly a brilliant glint from a parched patch of grass trapped his burning eyes! At last a faithful god had heliographed to him alone, a vital message!

THE Sun Father's rays reffected from a blade of flint, exposed to view by long dry bended tufts of grass, pointing landward. Belikana smiled sadly at a brave Boy's flare for color—a feathered 'comet' tassel dangling

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from the knife's sturdy hilt. A depression in the quicksand beach, below, and one lone ink-black head-size boulder resting on the harder lake bed just beyond the quicksand belt, gave Belikana leading clues:

Flying-Knife had trailed the man fiend, and there had waited, hopeful that he might conquer;—by knife, if the monster's metamorphosic flesh was vulnerable; or, by cunning trap, if not. There, for the last time, he'd watched; there, the craftier monster had espied him. The youth had thrown his knife; the man beast; the rock. It had either found its mark despite the youth's stag-horn charm, or Flying-Knife had dropped below for shelter, only to be trapped by sand which took his life. To clinch the shaman's theory, there hung from a dusty-dry branch of a withered oak a huge sleeping bat. And now the blade had been passed to the shaman's hands to carry on for him who was not afraid to die. Belikana fondled the blade as a precious infant charge of Destiny. And to carry out the fancied wishes of its mother, the guardian of the knife mercilessly spurred his limbs to move. They carried him no further than a clump of crackling brush. There his legs gave way, his strange eyes closed, his vision roamed as if drawn by power only understood by gods.

How far clairvoyance bore him mattered little but a tree he saw afar astounded him to the point of doubt of his own seeing. The smallest leaf could roof a council lodge. No Sequoia ever known could touch this tree's lowest branches. It had them surely and a girth so huge, a half day's walk might not encircle it. Strangely awed, the shaman's eyes were lured to scale its top-most branches. Dizzying with the climbing his vision plummeted to the ground. The jolt dispelled any doubt about a tree on earth. It was of heaven, too,—perhaps the grand green way down which his hope had come to her dear earthly mother. Of course no human could see the super-giant's crest. A strange attraction urged that he see a stranger form within it; a huge shadow resting on a lower branch and bound with threads of glistening silver. Belikana seemed to see no more than half its body. It moved, twisted, wrenched, to free itself, from cursed gleaming thongs, shackling massive talons, binding sky-sized pinions, and no doubt the lofty head which even no seer could see.

His vision hurried closer but the nearer his eyes approached the tree, the greater grew a challenge. The trunk was a cliff-steep dark brown wall of bark which looked not curved but flat. Where the Great Dark Bird's talons gripped a limb, the shaman could see nothing but a formless blindfold-darkness, black as hope's last breath. Fate had blinded him to greater things that he might see the smaller,—a myriad of creeping, crawling, crafty, creatures along the foot of the great dark wall, defacing Earth Mother's face by being. Yet, the shaman reasoned, somehow through these ugly 'creatures' cunning, one deity was powerless, another had no course open but to walk across the sky as ordained by the Great White One, the All-Wise Architect of Heaven.

But how had these Stonemen captured the Bird of Thunder? Not one could climb a wall of wood, a mountain high. Even if many could so do, to truss this mighty one with silver cords would be beyond their skill.

The shaman's mystic senses approached to hearing range. His vision could not see the 'bag of wind' haranguing for the crowd 'about it.' But his strange ears heard the rabble-rousers gloating gabble, "See! He no get loose—thanks and hail to our chief,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

our flaming torch—blood of the Sun Father who, himself, obeys our chief's commands." The voice waited. In unison, all eyes lifted, seeing no more than the shaman saw, yet, hailed promptly for seeing nothing. The voice continued, "Many asked how our leader caught this little rain bird. Me tell you:

"When great cold come, fool bird roosts here. Sleeps like dead as always do when cold comes. Our chief of chiefs so planned. He make pow-wow with Spider Woman. *She* sneak quiet, wind web round bird so no can move feet, no can flap wings, no can move head, even no open eyes to make flaming arrows. Him *stuck! ! !* (Roars of applause according to plan). More wind: Now what wampum Spider Woman think she get? Ha! ha! Oh is *big joke!* Ha! ha! . . . ! Spider Woman, Yum! yum! for carcasses of our enemies when dead! But it is *funny!* When dead they will be baked dry. Will have no blood. So she too starve, Ha! ha!"

TO HIMSELF the shaman mused, Chief of chiefs! Hah! That is a joke. *Cheat of cheats* he should say. But why he make pep talk?" The answer came forthwith: "You Stonemen here have make great war with Giant Bear. Soon, he will no be big dark beast. He will be white bear bag of bones. Good Medicine *honey,* from dirty Eagle beak, fat with wampum, do no good. Very soon, Stoneman will pull big claws, Bear get." Murderous whoops and chanting interrupted the bladdermouth's tirade. Belikana was thankful for his professional services well done. The seer might be an 'eagle beak.' His nose being absent, he couldn't check its contour. If it was a 'beak he hoped it could bite hard enough. He surely wasn't dirty, nor was he fat with wampum. In flesh, Belikana was growing leaner daily, like all Big Bison's people, thanks to these Stonemen. The yowling died down and the voice resumed:

"Me now tell what will soon happen to Tacoma—heap big pile of mud! Soon we sniff him out. He no more puff hot smoke to bother Stonemen walking on him. Our Chief wanted to be good father to Tacoma—show him which way to spit. But he spit wrong way. So, soon we will pull his tongue of fire, close his red mouth tight. Sit on him." (More whooping and hailing according to plan). And much more hoping by Belikana that the Sun Father would feed Tacoma much more fire for a gratifying spray. At last the big wind reached its target: "Me have told much. Me now tell what we soon do for finish Big Bison people. We make our slave AW-PA-TO-TAW take last water. Even lake will have no water at all!" Belikana had heard enough. He rushed to command his corporeal self. Opening his blood-shot eyes he saw the Sun Father's lowering shield. If only he could be as active as he once was! He had not the strength to devise a bridge across the quicksand belt. Even were he strong there would not be time. Somewhere about, AW-PA-TO-TAW was captive. Soon there would be no water. Belikana's spirit weakened. His disconsolate eyes listlessly scanned the gold drenched trees of the distant shores. His gaze swept slowly to the right, to the left and back again, with soporific monotony. Occasionlly his vision seemed to trip—to stumble. What was this thing he saw yet not well enough to trap his seeing? Belikana thought, "It seems so part of trees, me see it not." So was it until the sky turned to dripping blood as a cloud of the purest white sped by the spot, revealing in its wake a sky-hue change to the blue of the first night of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The great bird swooped closer and reached out with taloned claws for the knife . . .

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

frost. Belikana's inner mind spurred his vision. Perched upon the top-most branch of a leafless forest giant was the majestic Eagle that had given him a name. Struggling to his feet Belikana raised high the blade of Flying-Knife and shouted, "O true symbol of Great Voice, Great Dark Bird is helpless. With this blade sever web bonds so that all Big Bison people will not die—so that they may have freedom from the burning Stonemen yoke!"

The white head tilted forward to sense the wind's direction. The graceful pinions spread, moved surely as if controlled by an ace of aces. With a shriek that even Belikana's ears seemed stung stone deaf, the emblem of Liberty, took off! It circled wide and high that it might glide past the seer and catch the blade as on a day long gone, it grasped a gift tossed to it. With the blade in mighty talons, the bird spiraled high and higher until it seemed there was no ceiling to its climbing. As the air-borne dot blended with the sky, quite humanly Belikana's thoughts gave way to doubt, only to be chastised for doubting: "Must no have doubt! Must no lose faith! Flying-Knife can now move with wings as eagle! His spirit know no defeat! Know no death!"

Startled at the familiar voice of him he could not see, Belikana owned this was just Medicine magic of his own mind's conjuring. Yet he knew he was in possession of his senses and made concession until the clicking chatter of a bat convinced him that Flying-Knife had surely spoken from the grave. Thrice the shaman called his name but there was no response. Again he mistrusted his ears—even wondered he had seen an eagle. Despondent with doubt, he saw himself an abject failure. He would return and say so. Using a wind-felled branch for a staff, he, staggered along from tree to tree and so made his way to a spot a hundred paces from the old shore line. Suddenly the ground gave way and he found himself within a tiny cave—home of bats—trap refuge of a dogged loyal warrior, who had tried to tunnel upward until death had freed his spirit so it in turn, might move with wings within a fearless living bird whose head was white. The boy's emaciated body was not yet cold. A rush of air, laden with the offensive odor of stagnet water in the lake's central pool, told much, yet introduced a question. Did he have staghorn with him? Surely not when the flint scurfed his scalp. Belikana pondered. Suddenly it dawned on him the reason for the feathered tassel on the blade. He had made a staghorn bite the central core. The episode grew clearer. Somehow each contestant had panther-eyed the other until the fiend had been first to 'draw' but not quick enough to be first to 'fire.' What damage the blade had caused, Belikana did not know. Yet the throwing of it left the youth without protection. His agility in dropping below the ledge, let him escape with a minor wound. When the quicksand gave beneath him, he gained refuge in the lake entrance by a forward lurch. The entrance was not visible from above. The depression in the quicksand was. The fiend could draw but one irrevocable conclusion from that obvious fact.

Belikana had so little strength he could do no more than try to cover the brave lad's form with dry grasses from above. But the Earth Mother took the burden from him. The cave's fragile roof disturbed by the unnatural opening in it, gave way just as Belikana made exit from it. He reasoned sanely in concluding that the words he'd heard were self reproof of a gallant youth about to die.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BELIKANA'S wavering steps were few. Everything went black. He could go no further, but his mystic eyes moved with a speed he had not known. Strangely he willed a rise and fall of vision, clearing tree tops or even higher levels. Thus he could follow the eagle's winging. Flints and arrows hurled high. Scored flesh and blood wet plumage. Thought Belikana, "No evil power of air or earth can stop him! Had me such courage!"

Penalized for despairing, his clairvoyance failed. Again he was a lone bedeviled human. In this frame, he idly fumbled with his one time sacred charms;—"Feather he give courage. Belikana touch but no feel courage. He feel—no—he hears war drums. No drums, strange sounds which make like needles through him. Thumping sounds like many redmen feet all move together! Strange queer words, 'Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord! . . . He has loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword!' Belikana no understand but him must move. Queer sounds, queer talk, beat him, make him go! He must no stop!"

The shaman, man of courage, stood up and got in step with many mystic marching feet. Stubble, brambles, rocks, or ridges were mere invitations to test endurance. He had a mission to perform. An end in view! He would not fail his 'Hope'! But when he choked with smoke and saw an ominous glow a head, he wondered. The village was afire. The nearest end aflame. He drove his stride. He must go through it to reach his Hope. Even in the confusion of it, wild eyes and venemous tongues spewed insults, but he refused to hear. The Wigwam of his hope was still intact. A tottering figure blocked the entrance. Hoarsely it whispered, "Stay out! Shaman—liar!" Belikana wrenched a menacing knife from Big Bison's infirm hand, and staggered in! Chikeesikiss was startled from his unnatural voice. With gasps he managed to say, "Great Dark Bird will come bring rain. Must no have doubt! Must no lose faith! Could no get water. Until Great Bird bring water, Big Bison blood must live! So Belikana gives his own."

With lightning stroke, the shaman slashed his arm, slumped slowly forward with the bleeding member outstretched near the twins. He did not see Chikeesikiss shrink from her man-god's blood nor see her father stare wide eyed at one who offered his life for an old chief's own; nor did he know how much they both loved him now.

Unaware of his mortal self, Belikana's eyes greater than those of the eagle with the white head, started on their last mystic journey to parched lake which once was tranquil, exquisite —where once his ears had heard the night birds call. This time his eyes, his ears found no cause to rest! A strong detachment of Stonemen were talking in excited whispers, urging something lakeward. The thump! thump! of its body shook the whole Earth Mother. Exerting mystic effort to the limit, Belikana saw the huge squat outline poised upon the shore. It was AW-PA-TO-TAW, the Giant Frog, Stonemen's captive. Jabs of pointed weapons urged it to leap across the quicksand barrier—to quench its dust dry thirst—to drink the last of water. One pond-sized gulp dropped the surface level as if a giant drain had opened. Before a second draught things happened too quickly for a pen to keep pace in telling of them. The murky puddle funneled in a whirlpool swirl until a strange black stinking cross of logs came spinning once vowed he'd witnessed something upward into view. Another shaman

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

liked it, but that log cross was holy, bearing deities of all earth quarters on it. It was no rack of torture with ghostly bones of victims dangling from its whirling tips. The hellish nightmare speeded in its whirring, blurring, to the bursting of it, so rotten was its center. Not even liquid mud remained where once was water. But in the deep forbidding hollow, two strange green glowing phosphorescent eyes moved and stopped as if to say, "I'm rid of it! But not through! I've just begun to fight!"

There were bumps of mighty bodies as jets of steam spurted skyward. With a hissing roar a huge amphibian dragon clad in flint-scaled armor, wriggled upward. Belikana thought it RACEMION of Huron legend, the Water Serpent of the jeweled horns. Furious for the stealing of the sacred waters it was bent on satisfaction for the trespass—war at times breeds strange allies.

Up the sloping shore the creature wriggled, snorting, lashing, crushing all things which moved before it—a thousand thousand tanks in one long chain. Fortunate was any Stoneman who escaped for where one fell, a flattened splotch of broken rock remained. RACEMION thundered onward toward the land of caverns. Belikana's vision followed and detoured to the region of the tree. The winging eagle should be near it. He hoped he could see it. The upper branches of the super-giant were still tinted by the Sun Father's shield. The eagle was approaching and seeking altitude to reach the bonds about the Great Captive's head. As before, Belikana could not see this holy region. Only his own mind's imaginery could sketch the picture. Stonemen had had the eagle spotted. They scurried as ants disturbed by feet of human. Among them was a queer long-legged devil creature being urged to climb. "May be have her try tie *him* too, or may be she go to quick fix damage," thought Belikana. At least the Spider Woman climbed fast and so high that Belikana's vision blurred. Like the mouse she came down on a life line of her own spinning—how she spun! Midway of her back was buried the blade of Flying-Knife—precision bombing. No frantic wounded mundane creature ever cut so wide a swath, once she realized the charming charm she carried. Frenzy seized those about the tree for now came intermittant flashing from the sky. The Great Dark Bird was free. The source of flashing lowered but Belikana's eyes could not see the Great One's head. The light was blinding. Retribution's roar came when the great wings moved. The blasts of air from the sky-sized pinions blowed Stonemen as tumble weed. Few about the tree found protection in their cavern world, for the Bird of Thunder's eyes flashed forth myriads of white flaming arrows. Some mystic stony bodies withstood the giant flint tipped missiles. But the thin earth crust roof of the entrance to the dismal world below did not long hold. The crater was of vast expanse. Those below in the deepest cavern nooks, found no escape, for the Great Dark Bird chose to free the *lake upon his back,* in one huge mass. Those without, met worse fate than those within. Hot grey stone bodies cracked as the cold cloudburst fell upon them.

NO SHAMAN had ever seen such carnage. In far places, he saw more; the Great Bear's huge expanding claws, drove more Stonemen in for slaughter. The shaman thanked his gods he had given greater strength and sharpness to them. The demon SIS-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IUTL form was dying, yet there were more Stonemen in distant places—TACOMA, smouldering volcano, still puffed clouds of smoke, too harmless; yet its day would dawn. Knife-In-Teeth would have much yet to do. So too, RACEMION god of many waters. Right now, the Bird of Thunder had a mission too: To quench the fires of a blazing village,—to refill a muddied bowl with sparkling silver,—to swell the little creek with bubbling laughter,—to qunch the thirst of a parched Earth Mother.

Belikana knew not the lapse of time since he heard familiar voices. Nor did he know that he'd told, in feverish parts of a jigsaw puzzle the fate of Flying-Knife and what followed. Still more, he knew not how Big Bison and his daughter had fitted piece to piece, making not a perfect picture, but, enough. Other things however, he fully realized. The two that loved him most, had nursed him well although unaware that he too had pieced a jigsaw puzzle picture from brief scattered intervals of hearing, subconsciously imprinted on his mind. Chikeesikiss introduced the present interval of awareness: "Me think his eyes make blink!" "Me know his eyes no blink." Big Bison contradicted, "But he better had soon. If he keep on sleep like Bird of Thunder when Great cold come, Big Bison will no know what to do." The shaman knew the old Chief shook a puzzled head.

"But why good Father you no see butterflies? Was no much good in many pow-wows?"

Big Bison nodded, "Me no see butterflies because, War Wolf is *no yet dead*. Chikeesikiss remember how Belikana say very weak, 'War Wolf him like Sisiutl thing; one head dead, man face long gone, other head soon die.' Now Me, can no see butterfly till other head is dead."

"But Belikana he say him soon die and my father think there is much good in many pow-wows. And it is so that peoples in land of dead Sisiutl head are no more hurt but can no make stones to throw. These things are good? Yes?"

Big Bison not sure of the goodness of it all was very much befuddled. He uttered a weak "Umph!" of agreement, but his head shook a violent "No!" he summed the muddle in his mind this way: "May be what come from pow-wows is not so good. Chikeesikiss must no forget other Sisiutl head is no yet dead, and Belikana still sleep!" The Chief's head hung heavy between his knees.

Chikeesikiss looked hopefully for a flicker of an eye lash, a twitch of a lip. The quiet was painful. It was then that the two watchers knew by seeing that they were awake. They saw right through the tepee wall,—the whole out doors,—then, saw nothing. But the blackness, was filled with more noise than either had ever heard before. When they were able to hear, a voice was not strong. Clearly it said:

"Other Sisiutl head thing soon die if . . ." The shaman waited. The 'if' was a tremendous issue.

"If what!" Chikeesikiss asked, excitedly.

"If it is right to strike like Great Lynx! That was him, but him no hurt."

Big Bison gasped at the ghastly thought, "Belikana mean like fire dragon, sometime called Light Thrower?" He gently rested his hand on the shaman's forehead, it wasn't feverish. He tapped his own head sadly as he looked at his daughter. He would humor him.

"One time Big Bison heard jossakeed story, Great Lynx live in lake; make hop from lake to lake. Now, Big Bison no ever see big fire ball hop out from water but this time me see fire ball

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

make heap big light and—bang; s-s-s-s! Must be somewhere no lake no more. Must be all dry like dust!"

"It is like Big Bison say. Belikana know this truly. Sun Father has given Great Magician great secret of shining shield. Stonemen work like crazy ants while Bird of Thunder could no move but Sun Father no tell. Only Great Hare, Owl, Woodpecker, Porcupine, and Turtle learn secret while Big Bison people suffer from burning shield."

"Suffering is often mother of great wisdom. Yet how has Manibozoho, Great Magician, made Bad Medicine like Great Lynx?"

"Belikana do no know. But, he know it is like thunderstones no more so big as blade of Flying-Knife. Eagle with white head can drop him, but should one kill so many as would Great Lynx?"

"War Wolf is cruel demon!"

—"Would Big Bison drop thunderstone?"

"Would Belikana so do if War Wolf would no come back again no more!" encountered the Chief.

"Belikana no *want* to kill one Stoneman. He *know* Big Bison and his people no want to kill. It is a question hard as flint."

NEITHER man could solve the question. Knife-In-Teeth's warriors were risking all. He should decide the issue. The warrior chieftain summed his thoughts in brief.

"If this Sisiutl head live too long, may be many squaws, many little one, —even Chikeesikiss may die. Now would Big Bison would Belikana drop stone?"

"No! For me!" the girl broke in.

"Well, may be we send them many heap big black bats. Then if no quit, we drop 'im, Great Lynx thunderstone!"

"Me know where are bats and who has thunderstone but he no know he has him—*better had not drop!*" said Belikana.

"Who him?" shouted Knife-In-Teeth, "Me get 'im.

"Knife-In-Teeth *he* has *him!* But me no know it until Great Hare tell me, just soon after 'big bang' and things go black." Cold perspiration dripped from the warrior's brow.

"And me did find him stone soon back. Me thought pretty to give; may be to Laughin Mountain, but him now not so pretty!" He quickly fished it from among his sacred trinkets in his own parfleche and gently placed it upon Belikana's blanket. Its glowing was uncanny. Knife-In-Teeth looked sheepish, saying, "Stone much too warm, Belikana know how to keep him good. Knife-In-Teeth might drop him, careless, then Great Hare work for nothing." This weapon was beyond his understanding.

In ensuing days, Belikana grew strong enough to capture many bats in the region of the little cave. Knife-In-Teeth's far flung forces released them. Big Bison hoped. Knife-In-Teeth hoped and doubted. Belikana hoped and prayed to all his gods. If the black messengers would not yield tidings of surrender, he would have a heavy load.

The shaman kept to himself. Big Bison lacked the courage to inform him that the warnings availed nothing. Chikeesikiss would find him quicker, anyway. She realized the task before her. Her man-god was in a secluded spot outside the village. He was not aware that she approached though she made no effort to be quiet. He acted strangely, repeating over and over a queer little drama. He would build a tiny mound of earth, drop a pebble on it, scuff his foot to lay the whole mass

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

flat. Even when she spoke, he was concerned solely with the silly cycle of the falling pebble. She hoped she could erase the frown upon his brow.

"Belikana do he somehow see bats?"

"Oh, Belikana lately feel like he carry heap big stone. It take much breath so, no talk, only think, think!"

"Chikeesikiss no think Lynx stone so heap heavy. Can no see again?"

He kept it secured inside his shirt. As he drew it out he pretended it was truly heavy.

"Much pretty. Let Chickeesikiss hold him?"

"Too heap big heavy!"

"Me no fool! Belikana he say Lynx stone no so heavy as blade of Flying-Knife. Give it me?" She stamped her little foot and let him catch a smile upon her face. Slowly he handed her the stone. Carefully she took it and stepped backward out of reach. She did not smile. "Now Belikana must tell where is lake where lives Eagle with white head. If Belikana no tell, me run away and alone throw him stone!" She was serious. She had told him much.

"No! Belikana will take Lynx stone to Eagle even though his feet will have no wings." That night he made his way.

Late the next day, a mechanical man entered the village. Nothing startling afar off had happened. Chikeesikiss and her Father followed the automaton wondering what had gone wrong. A moment later when many villagers quaking with terror, shouted, that the Sun Father's shield had burst, father and daughter knew differently. The mechanical man halted to quell the fright of those that did not understand. He said, "*That* is no so. It is that last demon Sisiutl head is dead—that now for all Big Bison people and people like Big Bison people the Sun Father walks up, and not down. But for Stonemen people, he will walk only down."

MECHANICALLY Belikana turned about and strode back the way he came. Big Bison understood. It was easy for him to tell his people. Chikeesikiss had a problem not so easy,—to lift a crushing load from off a conscience. Her eyes followed the measured pace until the trees blended with his form. The clock-work energy was soon spent. He fell as stiffly as he walked. Shattering blasts hammered upon his ears. Blinding flashes seared his eyes. Ghastly fingers pointed at him. Then he saw them not. Repetition deadened him until he sensed a friendly muzzle's nuzzle, seeming not so friendly as once it did.

"How old timer! Got any carrots?"

"Not a carrot, Sorry,—or am I? *You* got me into this."

"Who *me?*" he stroked a pink ear thoughtfully, "Well — Could be. But looks like the Sun Father offered no objections to our breaking phoney ties with a Bang! Must have had good long range vision."

"I see nothing good about it. I was a party to it."

"War Wolf is not good. But would you feed him more blood than less? Without the Lynx stone, many more Big Bison warriors and many more Stonemen would have died than did."

"Don't make sense to me."

"Track my chatter,—Time was when too many Stonemen were glad to die. Why?"

Belikana rubbed his chin. "Sacrificed themselves for an ideal."

"Make it idol. Ideal turns my stomach. But let's go on from there,—The going gets tough. The great Lynx takes a plunge. Looks like the Sun Father's shield blew up—a shattered idol goes down for the count."

"You conclude it leaves nothing to die for. But—*I* gave the Lynx stone to the Eagle." The shaman's conscience

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

seemed unrelenting.

"Knife-In-Teeth found no joy in his work. He had to do it. You saw no way of ducking yours. Now its the future that counts.

"But this peace is a *mess*." . . . . .

"Well its no 'pipe' but it can be if you make it so. Ta, ta! I'll be seeing you!"

The shaman came to himself muttering, Peace—mess—pipe—peace—mess—pipe—mess—peace—pipe—" His addled thoughts took form. His conscience and himself saw eye to eye:—The Pipe of Peace, the sacred Calumet was Mizzybo's suggestion. In reflecting on the significance of the Calumet, he was concerned that his conscience had blinded him to the kindly tradition in victory. Reconciled that he was merely an instrument of destiny in what was, perhaps for the best, he could return and be once more a leader in causes, good. As a gesture of friendship what better then, than the Calumet of Peace. It would be symbolic of friendliness toward misguided creatures; a tribute of appreciation to All High Powers.

Big Bison agreed that to honorable warriors, such a gesture was in order. But conniving butchers, if still living, were not worthy. Knife-In-Teeth went further. They deserved to stew in their own fat. He was sure that Tacoma, Giant Bear, and little peoples in land of Mouse and Chipmunk felt likewise. Chikeesikiss had unquestioned faith in her man-god's ways. She volunteered to weave and pack a basket for the journey. In it she first placed tobacco, then the pipe and above that a crimson hatchet, a grass mat to cover, and lastly a few choice bits of meat for her men folks.

Big Bison and his warrior chieftain did not enthuse. The Practical Knife-In-Teeth asked one last question, "Just how will Pipe of Peace take away wish to throw first stone sometime."

"If we fail to carry out that which has been found good after other wars, we may be suspected of being watchful of chances to sometime be first to cast a stone. Must no have doubt! Must no lose faith! Yet no one having faith need walk with blindfold. He should walk with eyes wide open, to confront that which is evil. He does no need to know, how good things may come if he does walk with Faith."

Big Bison yielded. "It is so", he whispered.

KNIFE-IN-TEETH was particularly impressed by the weather eye precaution. Every man under his command must not forget his staghorn charm; additional impedimenta, military, or gustatory, was one's free choice. Personally the warrior preferred to risk the inner man for a few days to assure the preservation of the hide. He provided himself with one large shield, one spare, not so unwieldy, a bow and one full quiver, one tomahawk, one weighty battle-hammer, his own flint blade—*at belt* — war-paint zero — these two concessions, his personal gestures of friendliness. At that he figured he was leaning over backwards.

Tradition taught there should be good-will offerings, Big Bison held these should be limited to food, Knife-In-Teeth insisted that should be of token volume only. Belikana viewed the project somewhat as a missionary surgeon, —an evil something was to be expurgated from living creatures. Just how, he knew not, but when this foul spirit would be removed, this would be a gift beyond all others — Stonemen would see the Great Earth Mother as others did and would no longer hold a stone to throw.

Before Sunset, the basket placed in Belikana's keeping had been sampled

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

down to its sacred contents. As berries and green tid-bits were immediately abundant, Belikana decided to fill the empty space. In dense timber, that night, he parked the basket close beside him. And in the black dark preceding dawn, a threatening wind arose. Hurriedly, the Shaman helped Big Bison to his feet, grabbing the basket and such things he could and joined the rest to gain open country before disaster might befall them. Luck was with them. Early that morning, Belikana sighted the huge rocky mass, marking the region of the Stonemen.

A splotch of grey rubble outlined a man form—Racemion hit hard in the 'mopping up'. A scattered group of Stonemen bodies were oddly cracked by the steam of flaming arrows. "Queer creatures, all dead, but me no like to see 'em. May be some, good", Belikana thought. What *good* he saw was in certain bodies where the stone was no deeper than the outer shell, the inner part decaying as in any human.

While the Shaman and Big Bison gave attention to war's havoc, Knife-In-Teeth sought a high point for observation, once he pointed to the horizon. Belikana hurried to his side and saw what seemed a distant stretch of water, a land beyond, yet no single sign of green about it. Said Knife-In-Teeth, "May be eagle him drop Linx stone there. Yes?"

"May be," Belikana was thankful this mission was friendly. Even nearby no one had seen a sign of living things. All hoped they would, for, they had with them sundry tokens of friendship. Of course her basket came first to Belikana's mind,—and then, an appetizing thought of berries, sweetflag, sweetbirch, and what not else, picked up the day before. Slyly, but not unintentionally, he raised the lid, peeked in and slapped it shut! "By the Great Voice", he shouted to himself. "What reason it? Must no speak nothing. Must wait. Look, See!"

He grew visibly nervous; hoped they'd all soon see enough to tingle their nerves before becoming aware of his own tension. His wish was fulfilled. Many fresh odd footprints, almost cobblestone in shape, marked traffic to and from the crater entrance to the nether world. All grew tense. Knife-In-Teeth sought the lead. In hailing distance he shouted greetings, and back came response that sounded friendly. Taking greater courage, he unburdened himself of war trappings. Belikana took note and whispered, "It is well to so do. But not yet. One can be kindly, and still be strong." Just then a queer unshapely creature ambled forth followed by many others, blinking in the blinding sunlight, expecting to be slaughtered. Belikana touched the back of Knife-In-Teeth, "Now is time throw down teeth of War Wolf." Dramatically Knife-In-Teeth obeyed. Then came the parade of crippled, bewildered, manlike figures with limbs of rock, with clinking grinding mystic joints, all unsteady; one, with an arm cracked off, another, a hand, and a third who seemed doomed forever to look sideways. Such were they. Some made an attempt to smile, but so gradual was that, the face seemed set, even though it might be moving. "May be they have forgotten how, and now it hurts. Such things should no be," thought Belikana. Stonemen voices were still harsh like urn-born 'echoes', yet nothing boastful in them.

BUT from the Stoneman group, there stepped the very creature that could not turn his head. He peered at them with full right eye as an Egyptian figure. Belikana faced a problem of his own with one eye on the stranger,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the other on the basket. The moment was at hand, he would be Belikana, *Shaman,* or Belikana *fool!* His fingers trembled as he cautiously raised the lid of his basket, wormed a free hand in, fished about a moment and with extreme care withdrew the Calumet and tobacco. He heaved a sigh as he placed the basket on the ground and put a blanket over it. The sacred bowl was of pipe-stone, hammer-shaped, its stem handsomely adorned with red, white and blue feathers and a fringe of eagle quills. He proffered the sacred Calumet and a stone hand reached out and took the precious pipe. As was the custom, the hand returned the pipe, so that the ceremonial might proceed with honor-binding solemnity. The Shaman filled the sacred bowl with the 'Great Spirit's' gift to Man. From a fire built by willing hands Belikana drew an ember and when smoke wreathed from the tobacco he tossed off the glowing bit. In tribute to the Great White One, he aimed the stem to the shining heavens,—then down in reverence to Earth Mother,—and to supplicate protection of the gods who ruled air, earth, and water, he moved in a circle with the pipe's stem level. He offered it again. The wry-necked Stoneman drew a few whiffs of smoke, puffed high and to the earth and about himself quite like the original gestures. Big Bison followed. Then those of lesser rank, friends and former foes in alternating turns to thus bind themselves in undying friendship, a solemn pledge, never to be broken. As Big Bison people came from many quarters, variants to the form were to be expected. In deference to all Belikana was the last to smoke, and so impressive was he, even Big Bison stood in awe.

Eager eyes in stony head grew hungrier as food gift tokens were unpacked from many baskets. And when appetite threatened the dictates of decorum by a rush of the Stonemen leader toward the food, Belikana sought to check the frantic scramble by a hasty burial of the hatchet. Too huriedly, he raised the basket lid to withdraw the crimson symbol. Just then, he didn't! A flash of fur shot from the basket and crossed the path of him whose head was fixed awry. It nearly upset the leader's balance and in about four hops it made the central entrance to the cave. Many Stonemen wobbled, as crys of "Michabo! Manibozho!" and all the other names that bunny knew, rang out from all directions. As usual there were 'Thomases'. Belikana himself was not certain that the white hitch-hiker was truly Mizzybo. And, being honest, he said, "Belikana say he no know who he is, but will call to him. Will his answer prove him there?" The 'Thomases' nodded, "Yes!" and so the Shaman stepped to the cave's mouth and called "How! Friend! How!" All heard the quick response, "How! Friend! How! Friend!

"What say now?" "It *is him*!" chorused all. Even Belikana, strange to acoustical effects was convinced.

Now fear itself, turned rabid appetite to nausea. The Stoneman leader had lost all urge for food; and so, the Shaman urged him to composure, by bringing forth the crimson hatchet that it might be buried in closing gesture.

To give the basket to him who could not turn his head, seemed a peerless symbol of forgiveness. Belikana offered it. A stony hand shaking with fear reached for it—mystic medicine of dire nature might be imparted to it through contact with the Great Magician!

Much friendliness had been shown. The supreme surprise was still to come. Said Belikana;—"Our gifts of food, our Calumet of Peace were gladly given but there is another which no man can

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

give. This is life in flesh. Only Great Magician within cave can give this. Now all who wish this gift, go in!"

This was so fantastic, one Stoneman begged to ask,—"How we know this true?"

"Have you no seen, no heard Great Magician? Have you no heard Great Voice speak, and endured His wrath? Have you forgot great Lynx stone? Belikana has faith in Great Voice! You go in cave with as great faith and you shall walk in shining light of Sun Father!"

Misgivings were at an end. The Stonemen clinked their way awkwardly into the cave. Stone arms waved clumsily. Raucous voices attempted words of gratitude. The sacred rites of the faithful had been fulfilled.

THAT night when the blackness of the forest settled like a falcon's hood, Belikana slept soundly until the old sensation of long slender grasses touching his hand, aroused him.

"How Shaman" whispered Mizzybo in his usual lisping chatter. "Got any carrots? Pshaw! that's force of rabbit. But restricted circumstances recently compelled me to a prescribed diet."

Belikana chuckled. "How'd it agree with you?"

"Oh berry well at first, but mighty rocky later—rocks and more rocks. By air I felt 'em, on 'em I landed, and later—O me! On me they plopped! When you left they were all broken up! Went all to pieces!"

"You got a union job?"

"Oh yeah! Well it was no pipe—the hardest one yet—one up and two down until I tapped my last reserve—I raised 'em with a laugh!"

"That's Good Medicine in any language! You made everybody happy?"

"That's impossible. One was very hard to please!"

"Who was that?"

"Oh that cockeyed tombstone. Asked for life in this world—*and everlasting*."

"Wow! that's an awful long time!"

"I told him it was a big bite, but he said it was just his size—that he was a rock for punishment! So I took him at his word!"

"Mighty generous Mizzy'. You've always been true blue. Too you've proved that friendship is something deep, sincere, warm, dependable, lasting—no expedient of the moment."

"Smile old timer. Forget the orchids! Sometime may be you can square it up with carrots! Ta ta! I'll be seeing you!"

Belikanā swore by all his gods, someday he would do just that.

By sun up the party resumed their journey, all light of heart excepting him of buckskin beads and feathers. Belikana was terribly depressed, even Mizzybo had noticed it. War Wolf was dead. The Shaman's mission was accomplished. What was left in him for his hope to admire? He shielded his innermost misgivings rose from the rest as best he could. The homeward journey was not the way they came. A little longer route had been chosen. There was an open place where buffalo (more correctly bison) once ranged in great numbers. Many of the party hoped—Belikana wondered — would any be there now. The prairie came in view and the shaman saw reward for a former mystic effort. Here he had arranged mystic bones in a great white circle, taught him by one he yearned to see. A dark brown wave of no less than twenty thousand beasts, rolled slowly toward a gulch far out of sight. A drive was on! An agile hunter masquerading in bison head and hide, was the decoy luring the broad brown mass. The pressure of the herd urged cautiously by many of Big Bison's people

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

would soon push a handful of beasts over the precipice. Crippled by their fall, speedy spear and speedier arrow would dispatch them without needless suffering. The redmen found no sport in hunting. It was a means of living.

The distance to the village shortened. And as the party entered, smiling faces greeted them at every turn. And the most precious one, his *hope*, truly beamed upon the Shaman.

A bison hunt, called for dance and chant, that hunters might return in safety, might bring much meat, and that the gods might replenish the losses in the kill. Young folks played games. This was a time for merrymaking.

Belikana paid little attention to these things. Chikeesikiss was his interest. To her he told all, even to his last chat with Mizzybo. Gradually he realized there was a reason for his depression. Could it be that all Stonemen would, in flesh, always walk in the light of the Sun Father? Chikeesikiss sought to reassure him.

"What matter? Mizzybo gave them chance. They would not now break faith for so heap big gift. Has Belikana lost his faith?"

"Me have faith in staghorn. Always keep him with you!" Holding up his parfleche he added, "But Belikana have no faith now in Good Medicine he make, even though his heap great charm is more precious than tresses from Moon Mother."

A blush grew upon her face. A babble of excited voices interrupted their talk about things mystic. Strange bronze men, claiming to have been Stonemen were bringing many horses to the outskirts of the village. They wished to see the Chief. They wished to see the Shaman; he would know them.

Surely he did; there was that fellow who had lost a hand and the other chap with a wry neck. The man who spoke, Belikana did not know:

"Through mystic gift from Great Hare, we men of flesh now walk in light of Sun Father. We bring horses we have taken and many more. We would make big talk with Chief."

Elated, the Shaman welcomed them as friends and led them before Big Bison. The Chief equally exultant agreed to accept no more than the number of horses that had been stolen. And to further the spirit of good will, he ordered a feast to be enjoyed by all.

ABOUT mid-afternoon Belikana again sought out his hope. At day's end the place where the moss-clad giant fell, should be a delightful spot veiled in haze from the pipe of Mizzybo. Near sun down, the eyes of humans might see mischievous pukwudjies of the jossakeeds? Perhaps Chikeesikiss would enjoy the merry sight of tiny fairy folk gliding down a thousand golden rays! Belikana himself had little interest in these impish creatures. It was music in his heart that sought expression. And so, the tryst was made. Belikana made further preparations for the romantic sunset ramble. In wooded spots, late blossoms bloomed in riotous color. With his arms loaded with gorgeous flowers he soon returned and with the bashfulness of a little boy he pressed them toward her. Hugging the mass of poises she kissed their fragrant petals and trudged off by his side. After a few paces some of the blossoms fell. He picked them up and in a few steps the same thing happened again. At last Chikeesikiss reproached herself for clumsy hands and in jolly exasperation, she pushed them into his arms saying, "Belikana take! Me no can carry." The fragrant burden was very bulky in the transfer. Sometimes cupid has a reason. For a few moments the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mass of flowers rested between them—their eyes within each others—their lips close but not close enough to touch. Still they were in sight of the village.

Soon the old log loomed in view. It was a welcome sight. Belikana rested the blossoms at her feet and selected from their number the prettiest with which to ornament her hair. Over the evening air there came a familiar, "Gu-glum gu-glum!" of the giant frog with the voice of the big drum. So loud was the booming, the sacred waters seemed not far away. Teasingly Chikeesikiss queried.

"Can no take me there some time?"

"May be tomorrow. May be even tonight!"

There was no time for her to make decision. Behind them snapped a twig as if from the prowling of a big cat. They arose and wheeled to face the intruder, but too late! Chikeesikiss staggered clutched at her heart and fell before he could catch her. A shaft, long, slender, ebony-black protruded from her lifeless breast. Half-insane, Belikana withdrew the damnable thing. Its tiny tip—perfect in workmanship—was black obsidian.

Gently he straightened her contorted little body and covered it with flowers. Upon the ground he saw a tiny beaded bag, her own parfleche containing, Good Mystic Medicine that he had made. He, a dolt, an idiot, who fooled her with his own conceit of possessing all high power to do strange things. He grabbed the bag to toss it from him. The sight of it was driving him stark mad. But as he touched it the bag seemed empty. Gently he opened it; to find one charm only—a single lock of coarse coal black hair, none other than his own. With trembling fingers, he opened his own parfleche and found—*five* articles, one of them the bit of staghorn he had given her. In the transfer of the flowers she had transfixed him with her charms for opportunity to assure his safety.

In strange bewilderment he made his way to the village. Big Bison listened stoically to his confused account of the tragedy. The old man asked one question only,—"In what direction did the killer go?" Belikana had not seen him. He did not know, but the shaft was proof enough. Who was the murderer.

Belikana stood as in a trance. Big Bison gave directions, Knife-In-Teeth gave commands. Bronzed men who once were stone, cursed in murderous words their former leader for violating the sacred oath of peace. All these things Belikana heard. Then he raised his arms as if he himself, would take command. He stripped off his shirt and drew forth the flint he long had carried. To the angry crowd he shouted:

"This vengeance is not for you. It is for Belikana alone. Good friends, farewell!"

Revenge chiseled deep furrows between his eyes as he placed the flint between his own hard teeth. He turned and raced for the place of murder. In the twilight he could still see shadowy outlines. Keenly he searched for the monster's position at the time of murder. From there he might track him down. At last he found the spot and when he found it all the avenging killer instincts of his forbears welled in his hand which reached for the blade between his teeth. Before him was a solid rock, strangely shaped crouching like a man and about it were scattered bits of raiment, a bow, and quiver. Two living piercing dents where eyes would be, stared in unending terror. Belikana could not scalp a head of stone but he could stab the living eyes. He raised the blade to strike when queer word-ghosts restrained his arm, "life in this

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

world, and *everlasting*—"he was a rock for punishment."

Here before him was arrogance, cruelty, perfidy—all things villainous—embalmed in stone, destined to ever view, the place of murder of all hope. To destroy this thing's ability to see would destroy the punishment of sight. Belikana sheathed his knife, and covered his own tormented eyes with both his hands, saying "Vengeance is not for Belikana." He turned from the unholy spot. There was a last wish to be fulfilled. He sought out the whitest birch and with his own hands fashioned the slenderest branches into a rustic litter. For cord with which to lash it, he sought tough vines. Then upon it, he placed the body of his hope. In her hands he placed her parfleche and his own, lastly blanketing the whole with blossoms that she might sleep in beauty. Raising the head of the litter he dragged it into the shadowy vastness of the forest. Eerie moonbeams illumed the path. A tiny owl voiced a mournful, "Ho! ooo!"

NEAR midnight he reached the soft green-black bowl, filled with glittering silver. Nearby on a rise of ground was a little tree reaching out broad, open, almost leafless branches in supplication to the stars. Using two fallen saplings as a ramp, he raised to the tree's caressing arms, the precious symbol of his hope. Then looking up he said:

"You, my Chikeesikiss are with me now beside this sacred water which belongs to none but gods." Forlorn and bleeding from the forest brambles, he looked heavenward, thinking, wondering. As if in mourning the Moon Mother veiled her shining face. A flash and trembling rumble echoed from shore to shore. Great tears from heaven mingled with his own.

"O Great Voice," he cried," If Belikana's mission is fulfilled, send a white flaming arrow to his heart that he may go on with her." There was but the faintest rumble. Again he pleaded.

"O Great Voice, hear me, Belikana can not bear this endless torture! He beg you send white flaming arrow that he may go on with her." Still there was but the faintest rumble. Belikana grew desperate. Again he cried, "What has Belikana done that he should no do, or what has he failed to do? He can not bear this torture." There was no answer. He pondered deeply. Once more he pleaded.

"Oh Great Voice hear me. If Belikana's mission is fulfilled, he beg you send white flaming arrow to his heart that he may go with her. And when Stone demon has so long reflected on his evil ways that he begins to see beauty in shining light of Sun Father, the silvered glory of Moon Mother and feels the loving warmth of Earth Mother and wishes to reflect these blessings from himself to others, then pray send to him Great Magician so that he may live again in flesh."

This time the Shaman's prayer was answered.

THE time, 3:55 A.M.; the place, Peopleston garage; proprietor, Joe Mason; the customer, a Mr. Barton.

"Motor purrs like a kitten. Here's your dough. *Thanks* for helping me out," said Barton as he raced the engine of the car. The *thanks* was an extra five.

"Gosh," gasped Joe, "Thank you!" As he turned to open the garage door he exclaimed, "Can you hear that wheezy jalloppy outside? I bet it's old Doc Bailey's."

It was. The Doctor himself walked in before Joe had the door half opened.

"Mornin' Joe, I'm in a fix. Old man

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Harvey had a slump and I've got to get there quick. When I need my bus the worst it ups and lays down."

"Can't do magic Doc, but I got an ideer. Mr. Barton here is headin' up Harvey way. Nice fellow him. You can thumb him for a lift."

Barton was more than willing. And just as they reached the outskirts of Peopleston the car slowed to a stop.

"Dog gone, out of gas," exclaimed Barton. "In my rush Joe and I both forgot about checking my tank. But luck is with us I guess. Don't I see a gas sign on that little store?"

"Sure do, I'll rout out Johnnie Kerr and phone Mrs. Harvey while you're filling up. She'll be scared pink by this time!"

A few minutes later the Doctor returned walking slowly. "Too late," he said, "The old gentleman passed out ten minutes ago. But I'll ride out and pay my respects, if I may."

"Sorry Doctor he had to go, but I'll be glad to have your company."

As they started off again the Doctor remarked, "Mighty bad storm we had last night. Lightnin' hit two or three places in town. Pretty early in the season, but it has been tolerable warm lately."

"Storm surely was sharp. Hope the roads are clear. I've got to cover four hundred miles today. Got mixed in a traffic accident a few months ago that darn near killed me. A fool up in Hoopersville, racing about ninety, turned left without signalling, crowded me into a light post, and I passed out. Got out of the hospital only a couple of weeks ago. Don't know yet who the fool was. But my attorney wrote me he has a line on him and one star witness. But he never mentions names in letters. Has to see me today and that's that."

"Darn these wreckless drivers anyway! Funny thing for a doctor to be saying. Oh! Look there! Split from top to bottom and branches all over the place!"

George Barton threw on the brakes. "It's worse than that, Barton exclaimed. There's a double-barreled job for you if they are still alive."

A man in a black raincoat lay face to one side, a little in back of another. The man in the raincoat still gripped a dark-red sock filled with sand. His other hand held a rag and tow-rope, the face was partially masked. The figure in front was resting in quite similar position. It was clad in a worn topcoat. One arm embraced a couple of books. Barton started to drag the branches off while the Doctor felt the bodies.

"They're warm anyway," he said. "As I figure it, the shock knocked them both out, but the wallops from the branches kept them quiet. See both of 'em got nasty scalp scratches. And I reckon this bandit fellow never got a chance to 'black-jack' the other fellow, but as close to it as the thunder-bolt let him. Darn peculiar isn't it."

After the Doctor carefully examined both of them, he said, "They are both alive, but I think they better rest as they are for a while. When we can safely move them we better take them up to the "U" before we notify the sheriff. The chap with the books, is probably one of the students." Opening one of the books, he added, "Sure enough, Cyrus Jason, Faith University. Now although we remember all of the facts as to their positions and conditions we found them in, I think someone in authority at the "U" ought to come down here now, for we can't be sure they both will come through. The University is only about a quarter of a mile. You wouldn't mind running up

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

there and routing out the first party you can. But I wouldn't say anything about this other chap being a bandit. The less fuss the better at this time of the morning. I will stay here and work over the fellows and keep them going."

"Count on me," replied Barton, forgetting his urgent meeting, "I'll be back."

The first light he noticed was in the women's dormitory office. He rang the bell three or four times, received no response, then started tapping on the door. Dot heard the gentle knock. She hadn't slept a wink because of watching Beatrice in her exhaustive sleep. Sticking her head out of the window, Dot stage-whispered, "Say you down there, not so much rumpus! What's up!"

BARTON hastily introduced himself, told what he could and why the Doctor wished some one in authority would come down immediately and see them before moving them up to the University.

"Leave it to me!" replied Dot, she drew her head in and rushed over to Beatrice. She shook her. "Bea dear, wake up!" Beatrice mumbled something and Dot shook her again.

Beatrice replied incoherently, Mizzybo gave chance—heap big gift—Belikana lose faith—" Dot shook her again. "Hey you! Bea, wake up! Quit your crazy chatter." But Beatrice mumbled on.

Growing frantic, Dot rushed to Mrs. Ferguson's room and told her of Mr. Barton's call. She hurried back to her room-mate and found Beatrice jabbering more mystifying bits, as if talking to herself. "—He no like my father Big Bison. He no like Belikana." Hesitating she then faintly mumbled, as she held her hand to ear," Chikeesikiss hear gu-glum!" and loudly " Can no take me there some time?" Bea's face twitched. She clutched at her heart. The sharp point of the obsidian arrowhead pricked her breast. Opening her eyes widely she cried, "Where am I?"

"Right here pardner! but you scared me half to death. Talking about a banana, and your father being a big bison and you hearing a gu-glum and some place you wanted to go! Where the—have you been!" Beatrice fully awake, interrupted, "You big dummy! I didn't say banana, I said Belikana, may be I did say Big Bison was my father. That was right."

"Globe trotter, Magic carpet stuff. Now get this you wanderer. Cy, is okey doke. Got a little shock from lightning in the storm last night, but he's alive and they will be bringing him up here in a few minutes. Another fellow was struck at the same time. Do you savvy?"

She did. She arose faster than Mizzybo from the basket. And being fully dressed from the night before, she muttered a psuedo—cussword as she slipped her right foot in to her left shoe, then asked:

"Where is he Dot? Where is he?"

"Calm yourself little one. He's somewhere along the Peopleston road in care of a Dr. Bailey and a Mr. Barton."

"I'm on my way! As Bea rushed out, Dot threw a wrap around her, whispering loudly, "Mrs. Ferguson is sending one down there now!" It was useless to try and stop her.

Professor Bertram's car was passing the dormitory. Beatrice hailed him and begged a ride. As the car started, the old gentleman asked, "Is Mr. Jason a special friend of yours?"

"Well—I hope so." She blushed. Her jittery condition was a welcome tonic to the aging Professor.

In two or three minutes he re-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

marked, "There they are. The elderly gentleman is Dr. Bailey, the broad shouldered fellow is probably Mr. Barton. They have the stranger pretty well tied up. And there's Mr. Jason. They're still working on him. But don't worry and for goodness sake don't shake yourself to pieces."

"Oh Professor, I'll just die, I know I will if Cy doesn't pull through!" Bea said.

"Bail out kid! May be you can do more than the M.D. for him." Professor Bertram made an impromptu introduction all around, but when he glanced at the bandit he exclaimed, "Oh me! Oh My! If it isn't Hardy Stoneere Jr.! What a mess!

Beatrice successfully suppressed her urge to strangle Hardy before imposing her assistance on the good Doctor. For a time the Doctor wished Miss Melicent was in darkest Africa or the middle of the Gobi desert. But when he saw her frantic flutter, the nervous rubbing of Cy's hands and the occasional kisses she shyly planted on unbandaged portions of his face, he admitted she had something on the ball.

"Gosh all hemlock," he said, "I've been working on that chap for half an hour to keep his heart ticking. Now this kid takes my case away and I wouldn't be surprised if she wouldn't have him talking before long. Don't love beat hell!"

The three men laughed in spite of the serious situation. Although Junior showed little sign of coming to, the old Doctor thought his condition even better than Cyrus'. The men chatted quietly about the 'unfortunate mess' as the Professor had termed it—Cy's sterling character—his financial handicap—Junior's father, chairman of the board — the school's reputation — the necessity, if possible, of keeping the whole matter hushed up.

Beatrice meanwhile, kept up her feverish attention. She threw off her wrap and tossed it over Cyrus.

Dr. Bailey, with professional eye on his patient, noticed Beatrice suddenly hold her ear close to his patient's lips. She grew greatly excited and increased her efforts. Then in desperation, she looked at Mr. Barton, pleading, "Oh Mister, please do something for me. You know the dormitory. Tell my roommate in 206 to bring down the box I received last night. Tell her never mind why. Please don't ask questions. Just hurry. I'm not crazy."

Barton fell victim of feminine appeal. The Professor and the Doctor gasped in unison! "What the . . ."

THE immediate situation put both men on the inactive list. The morning chill grew noticeable. Said the Doctor, "I think they'll both pull through but I don't dare move then yet, and I think it will be more comfortable if we had a little fire."

"That's an idea! I have an old box in the back of my car and we'll have a fire in two jiffies. And—eh—Don't you think it's safe to move Junior over a few feet. A few branches around him might screen him from anyone passing. They'll think we're tourists and will keep on going. *We've got to keep this hushed up.*"

The Doctor agreed and by the time the fire was built Barton returned with Dot carrying the box. Naturally he had told her more of the general situation. Beatrice grabbed the hat box and in *less* than a jiffy had pressed the muzzle of a very lively rabbit against Cyrus' hand. Then they heard his voice! "How! Friend How! No Mizzybo, I haven't any carrots. What are carrots anyway?"

Beatrice instantly countered with the next riddle saying in a queer little

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

whisper, Ta ta! I'll be seeing you." With this she planted bunny solidly in the box and turned to Dot, "Hold down the lid, Pal, but for Pete's sake, don't sit on it."

She then renewed her incessant chatter, until Cyrus spoke, very plainly, Belikana's last prayer, "Oh! Great Voice, hear me . . ." Even Beatrice gasped at this. She shouted back in his ear, "You are with me Belikana, jossakeed, Shaman! You who received the sign from the Great Voice!"

The onlookers were more puzzled than ever when Cyrus opened his eyes, looked at Beatrice, closed them again as if in collecting his senses, and opened them once more, saying:

"Chikeesikiss, Bea, dear little girl, what was it you said?"

She repeated, and added "Mizzybo is O.K. Now, wake up and give him some carrots." Lifting bunny out of the box again, she tucked him beneath Cyrus' arm. The warmth quieted Mizzybo's shivers, but not the normal quiver of his nose. Cyrus roused, this time. "Say how do *you* know about Mizzybo?"

"Dreamed it I guess. You said something that sounded familiar to me so I carried on in the same line."

"Why, Bea, I've had the darnedest dream! I didn't know who I was or where I came from. I was a Shaman and a medicine man. And you were a foster daughter of an Indian Chief."

"And—the last thing I remember, Bea replied, was a walk with you and a lot of flowers. We heard the giant frog and then something hit me in the heart and that was all."

"Well that ruined me," he said smiling.

The two talked rapidly comparing details of their dreams. High spots matched remarkably well; so well, that the puzzled group listening in, were amazed. Dot offered testimony to verify the truth, of the coincidence in dreams. Gradually Cyrus grew more and more aware of the others present and understood he had been shocked by lightning. Nothing more.

As a psychical or psychological case, this was of intense interest to both of the older men. At the very least, there must have been powerful and factual emotional stimuli in back of it all. Experienced in the ways of youthful hearts, they knew they were to tread on tender ground, so they 'walked gingerly' in their inquery. Beatrice yielded reluctantly but admitted there had been a very sad parting after a not too enjoyable study period in the library on the preceding evening. They had perused numerous volumes on Indian mythology and had crowned the evening with a lovers' quarrel. She had returned to the dormitory. Cyrus had started for town. Willing to assist in the solution of the peculiar case Cyrus carefully answered a question of the doctor: "I recall I was walking along headed for town—pretty much down —and just before I got about this far, there was a terrific crack of lightning. Instantly there came to my mind an Indian superstition I had read in the library,—if an Indian was struck by lightning and recovered from it he became clairvoyant—a prophet, perhaps. That was about all I recall. The rest was this dream."

"THAT was what I was after," exclaimed the Doctor. "Now, folks here is my conclusion: It was *not* the bolt which Mr. Jason remembers that hit this tree. He wouldn't be able to recall that one. So, there must a been an ensuing bolt, a couple of seconds later. This struck the tree and shocked both boys. But the last 'mental picture' which Mr. Jason had, was the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

superstition and its association with lightning. It seems possible, everything considered, he might have had the same sort of a dream if that fellow over there had really hit him with the 'black-jack.' We have reason to believe that this was *his* intent, but not a bit of evidence he carried out his plan. The bruise on Mr. Jason's head is not the usual place for a blow to fall when delivered by a person at the rear of the victim. That bruise came from a branch of the tree exploded by the bolt, and that wallop kept Mr. Jason asleep. Presumably the other fellow got a similar dose. Queer, of course, but just one of those things that occasionally happens. The rest of the solution I place in the hands of our learned Professor. As I understand it psychology and psychical phenomena are his meat."

Cyrus made a vain attempt to break in, but was obliged to wait patiently to learn who tried to hit him. Barton was offering no comment but was listening with intense interest. Professor Bertram was conservative in his theory: "Oh! I'm no authority. Usually I'm extremely skeptical of alleged telepathic communications. But in this case, I don't know. The scene was set to perfection,—both parties had concentrated their attentions on the same subject mater. This quarrel badly upset them from the emotional standpoint. Quite apparently the young man gave up hope of the young lady. The lightning naturally evoked the Indian superstition. The young lady went to bed pretty much out of sorts and . . ."

Dot rudely interrupted, "Say Professor, she blame near passed out. I watched her all night. I think she was unconscious."

Professor Bertram smiled, "Well now there you have it. The young lady was thoroughly exhausted and in perfect condition to receive telepathic communication from a mind which at that time dominated over hers. The fables of myths which wove themselves into the dream are probably not precisely as recorded by authorities. And such fragments quite possibly were selectively associated with real incidents of the last twenty four hours. To illustrate, consider just a single selection;—the dragon dance about the bonfire. Remember Mr. Mally and his flashlights? Now note how the memory of this would quite naturally lead to the selection of the jewel giant water serpent myth. So I could go on and on. It is a strange case worth recording, if the young folks have no objections?"

"What say, Cy?" Bea asked.

"It's O.K. with me if the Madam will accept it in lieu of the theme!"

Bea had never mentioned the quarrel with her. Cy's remark passed everybody but Barton.

"May I ask a question?"

"Go ahead," said the Professor.

"Well, I'm curious to learn what Mr. Jason just referred too?"

Beatrice sprang up and faced Barton. "Please don't press that question!"

Barton paled as if he had seen a ghost.

"For God's sake, girl," he shouted, "Where did you get 'Black Obsidian?' I found that arrowhead years ago!"

In spite of her embarrassment she gave an honest answer at last. "I found it yesterday morning."

Cy was overly eager to verify this. "She *did find* it. The woman who threw it away didn't want it any more."

"Who was *she?*" asked Barton, hopefully.

"Miss Abigail Mardigras, A.B.; Ph.D.; and N-U-T if you ask me," said Cy, very much himself.

"Don't you mean Abigail Marden?"

"Well Mardigras is her monicker at

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the U. Isn't it Professor?"

"Quite so. Quite so. This is so upsetting! In fact, at her request I took over her class in Mythological Symbolism, yesterday morning."

The conversation went on with a more increasing tension:

"Suppose you Miss Melicent loan the point to Barton and let him find out if this lady hasn't missed it?"

Barton flushed at the thought.

Cyrus calmed him down.

"Are you or have you been an archaeologist?"

"Surely, prior to the World War, and I found that point not far from Chillicothe, Ohio. Although I have never told it before, I found it within the skeleton of a young woman, and I have often wondered if it hadn't penetrated the heart of the girl of long ago. To identify the point, if Miss Melicent will turn the hook that holds the pin, just half way round, the gold back mounting will open. Try it!"

"Jeepers, creepers, a death-head, a skull!" Bea shouted and passed it around.

"Yes, a tiny flaw in the stone. Quite appropriate? Eh?" Well after giving the point away, I lost interest in that work—the war, and all—shell shock—months in the hospital."

BEA handed the point to the archaeologist: "It's yours Mr. Barton. If you choose to give it away again, please tell the lady I'm very sorry I lost my temper."

"Gosh! *Thanks!* If Dr. Mardigras is Abigail Marden, I hope we'll both be glad you lost your temper."

Realizing that Barton was probably an authority on matters Indian, Cyrus was curious to know why the eagle in the dream, named him "Belikana."

"Couldn't have called you anything better, said Barton. It's Navaho, BEL-IH-KAH'NAH, meaning American. You're *that!* Some texts give brief vocabularies. That *stuck* with you!"

Bea hesitantly queried, "Now why, do you suppose, that I told Cy, only he could call me 'Chikeesikiss'?"

Barton frowned thoughtfully, most mysteriously, *vexingly,* then he laughed and said:

"Follow this—SHIH-KEH. Translates as 'young woman,' and SIH-KISS as 'friend,'—in other words 'girl friend!" Oh gosh, how I could go on. Your *real* name Beatrice Melicent means 'happy sweet singer,' and Cyrus Jason—sun healer; those are just 'happenstances' in the meaning of names according to Clarke."

Cyrus was satisfied with being an American and a sun healer but he couldn't understand why he was in on that terrible Lynx stone episode.

Barton sought to explain: "You picked up the myth like the rest of them. And in the dream, you cooked up this *wholly preposterous* 'vest pocket' meteor to stop slaughter. In putting it in use, you were the fall-guy."

Junior had by no means, been neglected. Dr. Bailey had made no effort to rouse him but at this moment, he had cause for alarm:

"Say my patient here is wide awake, staring like a lunatic over his left shoulder. He's trying to speak but can't."

All but Beatrice and Cyrus rushed over to Junior's side. Cyrus insisted on knowing who this other patient was,—that fellow who had planned to hit him. Beatrice told him, and in spite of her protest, he crawled over to Junior. He bent low and whispered in Junior's ear. Instantly Hardy's eyes, welled with tears and he spoke volubly. He said he had heard much, for many minutes, but couldn't speak. It was Cyrus words of forgiveness that unlocked his tongue.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He made open confession of harmful intentions and offered no defense of his actions excepting to say it wasn't all his fault. His parents had raised him to be nothing but a spoiled brat. Now he loathed them. He felt alone in the world but knew not why. He verified Barton's surmise. The Madam's name was Marden. His parents had known her many years. She had had an affair of the heart and because the man had ceased to correspond apparently without cause during the war, she gave him up and changed her name, hoping to forget. Of recent events, Junior admitted his lack of patriotism, his disinterest in R.O.T.C. in which Cyrus had been a leading figure. He had burned with chagrin over the bonfire defeat and had been eager for revenge. A letter from his mother the preceding morning, enclosed a note from his father. It offered him the very opportunity he craved. Stoneere, Senior was up against it from a traffic accident of months preceding. Cyrus was the star witness against him. His non-appearance at the pending trial would be most opportune. So Junior planned the rest. Cyrus verified this. He had seen an accident and had received a letter from an attorney telling him he would be summoned to appear in court for the prosecution, but had no knowledge of who owned the two cars involved. Barton sensed it was his own case and by checking on date and circumstances, found it was.

JUNIOR grew increasingly nervous and emphasized that he was ashamed of himself and his parents. He vowed he would have them pay and pay well. And further, he assured Beatrice that her parents would have no cause to fear the future. With so much freely spoken, no one present had the least desire to call the sheriff. Moreover, Barton was in a most forgiving mood, not for the Stoneere's Senior, but because of a very penitent Junior.

To hush up an odd situation, Cyrus suggested a squib for the Peopleston Courier:

"A. Hardy Stoneere, Jr., and Cyrus Jason, very close friends and both of the senior class of Faith University, were badly shocked by a thunderbolt while on their way to town during our recent unprecedented storm. The well-known local physician Doctor Bailey is pleased to advise mutual friends both have completely recovered."

All heartily agreed and Barton offered an additional suggestion:

"Friends, isn't it timely we bury the hatchet in absolute silence about the unpleasant angles of this little episode in our lives and resolve to bind ourselves in undying friendship. I have a new pipe. It's not double stemmed. Neither has it feathers. But I think the Great Spirit will forgive us in the ceremony of the Calumet. Father Sun is showing his shield; the pipe is red and we have an open fire."

"But where's the little red hatchet?" asked Bea.

"How about the little red sock?" said the Phoenix reborn.

"Perfect," said Barton. "The ladies will witness. Their integrity is unquestioned."

And so, the Calumet of Peace was solemnized, briefly, but without omissions. And when the 'red hatchet' was laid to rest in Mother Earth, Junior broke the silence:

"Surely makes me think."

"Makes us all think," said Cy, "There's more truth than poetry in legends. Don't think me facetious when I speak of this 'iron man' I now hold in my hand,—we send this silver medium of exchange promiscuously without a thought of the legend on it. Yet

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

who will deny its motto 'In God We Trust' is the Good Medicine of our personal welfare—our Nation's life."

"Wasn't I the 'rock for punishment?' Guess I'll join the Marines soon," said Junior, adding "and if the Doctor permits I'll say Cheerio! I have a 'mission to perform.'"

As Junior's car pulled away, Doctor Bailey drew Professor Bertram to one side:

"When that lad said he loathed his folks and felt alone, he had good reason. His name through adoption, is really Stoneere, but he was born a Johnson. An old practitioner does not forget his first few patients. I attended his mother, a fairly well-to-do widow when the Stoneere family first called me in.

"They were apparently foreigners and were employed occasionally at odd jobs for the widow. Her condition was hopeless. Later I heard that Mrs. Johnson willed her all to the Stoneeres for the care of her boy. And I have also heard they had no little trouble in the matter of that will. Do you think that he should know?"

UTTERLY upset, the Professor answered, "I must have time to think. This world is so disturbing! And now look! There comes Hanley's sputterer. Hope he isn't bringing more upsetting news!"

As Hanley stopped his motorcycle and handed the Professor a telegram, he said, "Folks at the 'U' told me you were here. This is sad news. So be prepared."

Shaking fingers opened the envelope. After reading the message he silently handed it to the others and then remarked:

"I'll reply later. Thanks Mr. Hanley."

The wire read:

"BEFORE COMA — STOP — A. HARDY STONEERE SENIOR BEGGED I WIRE YOU IMMEDIATELY — STOP — REASONS OBVIOUS — STOP — HE AND WIFE FATALLY INJURED WITHIN LAST HOUR—STOP—REAR END AUTO COLLISION NEAR HERE — STOP — BODIES OF GUNMEN IN FOLLOWING CAR NOT YET IDENTIFIED.

R. E. SMITH, M.D.,
ETHERTOWN JUNCTION
HOSPITAL.

Now Bailey could no more delay a word of consolation; nor Dot defy that Sand Man's domination; nor Bertram well avoid a friendly obligation; nor Barton well decline his breakfast invitation. Thus logically *four* from *six* left two.

Said Bea to Cy, "That accident was very queer?"

"Those words are from my mouth,—I hope. It remains to be proven that it was any racketeer affair. Remember the Navaho rug and how the Sun can bless it every morning; and too, how seldom, they say, the old boy ever missed an evening meeting of the Board?"

"Sure do! It's funny, Cy, how they leave no rug unturned to promote a 'cause.' Gosh I hope there isn't going to be another World War!"

"Why worry, 'Chick,'" said Cy. "I wonder how Drum Pond looks about now?"

"Can you no take me there sometime?"

Cy said no word. Instead he drew Bea close and kissed her for the first time. Then, lifting Mizzybo by his long pink ears, he placed a resounding smack between his very white whiskers and said, "I've not forgotten the carrots, brother!"

THE END

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The GREATEST FANTASY

by CHARLES RECOUR

IF READERS of fantastic fiction were polled to find out what in their estimation is the greatest fantasy story ever written, unquestionably there would be many answers. In the first place, "by greatest fantasy" we have to define what we mean. What would be great by the standards of one person, would be mediocre by the standards of another. Perhaps the question should be rephrased; what is the widest-known fantasy? It is generally conceded that on this basis, probably the answer would be—the legend of Faust. This has been told and retold a thousand times in a thousand different ways. Today it is most familiar in the form of the opera, both Gounod's "Faust" and Berlioz's "The Damnation of Faust," the latter being perhaps more complete. Both are based on Goethe's famous classic "Faust." Goethe in turn, is supposed to have gotten the idea from something of Marlowe's Faust. Regardless of the origin, the stories all follow the familiar pattern of the temptation of a man by the devil. In its way, Faust is one of the most fascinating fantasies ever written, because it involves all the fundamentals of good fantasy, ranging from the beautiful girl to the fascinatingly evil Devil. It is a gem among stories. Faust, Dr. Faustus, or what have you was a renowned metaphysician and philosopher of medieval Germany. The bearded old sage, hoary with age, is pondering the futility of living any longer. He has seen all life has to offer, he has solved his problems and he sees no further reason for living. In his despair he calls on the Devil for aid. In a flare of flame, Mephistopheles appears before him and proceeds to tempt him. "Give me your soul," he says to the aged philosopher, "and I will give you these!" And before Faust's eyes he conjures up visions of wealth, and health and youth, and joy. Faust resists all these, until the devil shows him the prize of all prizes, a lovely girl seated before a spinning wheel. With this Faust breaks down and makes a pact with the Devil. He at once becomes a handsome young man.

The Devil takes him first to a drinking-room, a tavern where university students are singing of the joys of life, introduces him to the crowd and furnishes wine to it by striking an empty cask. They leave the tavern when the students become angry and fearful when one of their number spills some of the magic wine and it flares up into flame when it touches the ground.

Faust meets Marguerite, this lovely golden-haired girl, but he makes little progress with her because she is fundamentally good and virtuous.

In addition she is always guarded by a middle-aged chaperon. Faust calls to the Devil. He gives Faust something that will break Marguerite's resistance—a cask of fabulous jewels. In addition he, the Devil, dallies with the maid, so that Faust can be alone with Marguerite. In spite of herself, Marguerite succumbs to the charm of Faust and the magic of the jewels. She falls madly in love with Faust and they have their tryst.

Valentine, Marguerite's brother, a soldier, learns of her state, and attempts to kill Faust, but he, aided by the magic of the Devil, kills Valentine, instead. Dying, Valentine curses Marguerite and leaves her terrified. Meanwhile Faust goes on to the revels of Walpurgis Night, wherein he further enjoys the pleasures of the world. Marguerite, half-mad with terror, kills her child and is in prison. Faust appears to her and urges her to come with him, but even in her delirium, her innate purity comes to her rescue and she repulses him, to die and to be borne to Heaven. As she dies and is borne heavenward by a chorus of celestial angels Faust is dragged off into the depths of Hell by the Devil. That is the story of Faust, essentially, though there have been numerous variations on this theme.

Simple as it is, it stands out as a masterpiece. Many fantasies have been based on a similar theme, and treated in a like fashion. How often have you read a story wherein the hero is tempted by the devil? Never-the-less, for classic beauty, the legend of Faust probably remains the superior of any that has been written. In the opera, the music that accompanies it—the story—strongly aids in the illusion of the fantasy and it is a difficult thing not to be carried away by it. Faust is the fantasy of all fantasies.

* * *

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Felix held the massive blade in his hand and stood alone on top of the bar.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The TAVERN KNIGHT

by S. M. TENNESHAW

while the dragon, spouting fire and smoke, roared a thunderous challenge . . .

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Some men are born meek and stay that way the rest of their lives. Felix Murphy was born that way, but something happened that changed him—the dragon, of course . . .

HAD Felix Murphy obeyed his conscience, completely avoided the Dragon's Head Inn, and gone straight home from work that evening, it would never have happened. But for the first time in over twenty years, Felix Murphy did not go straight home.

Felix was a little man. He was not of the heritage who made history, fame and fortune—just a little man. But Felix had great aspirations. He longed to be someone of importance, to give orders instead of take them—just little teeny-orders.

He longed to see someone jump to his commands, like he had jumped for the last twenty years in the Manhattan Water Bureau whenever Dagmar Schultz—big, blustering, swearing Dagmar Schultz, had snapped an order at him.

Felix hated the Dutchman. He hated him because of his strength. Felix despised weakness, and because he was the weakest person on Earth, he hated himself. Even at home he was not master. His wife, Dora as big as he was little, continually nagged at him. Home and Dora was almost as nauseating as work and Schultz.

Often at night Felix would dream. He saw himself giving orders at the plant — giving orders to Dagmar Schultz. He saw himself standing before the herculean pumps which distributed water to all of Lower Manhattan—standing there and bellowing at the top of his voice, while men jumped to do his bidding.

Often he would dream of going home at 5:30 to stop at the Dragon's Head Inn, where he would leisurely place his foot upon the gleaming brass rail, rest his elbows on the slick, mahogany bar, and in a steady voice ask for a straight whisky.

But then Felix would suddenly wake to find that it was all a dream. He would cry and curse alternately, damning his lack of courage and crying because he knew he could do nothing about it.

And so Felix kept going to work at 8:30 every morning except Sunday, when he would have to stay home all day and listen to Dora moan and wail about their ill luck, the price of butter, and about all the nice things that Hinkleman's had for sale the last week which she could have bought if only she had a husband with a backbone, half a brain, and a pocket clogged with bills. And at 5:30 every evening, Felix would trudge homeward, past the Dragon's Head Inn from whence came the rollicking laughter of men who were men, and the soft enchanting clink of glasses on the bar.

That night, Felix, for the first time in twenty years stopped before the tavern to listen to these sounds of merry-making. Sounds that he would have sold his right arm to be making—if only he had the courage.

Felix marveled inwardly that he had the audacity to stop before the tavern, and he almost imagined himself strut-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ting through those swinging doors to park himself importantly before the bar. Almost, that is, because suddenly the scrape of heavy feet came from behind, and before he knew what was happening, a mass of humanity barged against him. A weak protest died in his throat as he was borne headlong through the forbidding portals to find himself standing dumbly amid the noisy interior of the Inn.

From somewhere, Felix heard a gruff voice demanding: "Well, is it in or out! Make up your mind!"

Felix had never been so terrified in all his life. He wanted to run, fly, and congratulate himself all at once. The result was that he did nothing.

The air was choked with tobacco smoke, and though the evening was yet young, the bar was crowded. Laughter, curses, and the profane cry of "BEER!" all smote upon his ears at once. Felix shuddered and glanced about him.

TWO massive bartenders were kept busy at the tap. A never ending stream of amber liquid poured into waiting glasses, topped by a rich, creamy lather. Felix marvelled that almost as quickly as they were filled—they came back empty.

Behind the bar stood a massive set of oaken shelves, upon which reposed the largest assortment of whiskies, brandies, and gins, that Felix had ever seen. Above these shelves, on the dull plaster of the wall hung an artificial dragon's head. Beneath it swung a double edged sword.

Turning his attention to the tavern proper, Felix noted that only a few of the many tables and wall booths were occupied. Dimly he became conscious that a cold sweat was forming on his brow.

Felix wanted to run. He was scared, and he knew it. Inwardly he wished he could walk up to the bar and demand a stein of beer, but he also knew he lacked the necessary courage.

And then Felix received the shock of his life. One of the bartenders had his eye on him. It was a cold stare that made water of Felix's already wobbly knees. It seemed to imply: "Well? What are you standing there for! Speak up or get the hell out of here!"

The room began to swim before Felix's terrified eyes. He felt as if he were going to faint, and almost welcomed the thought; when suddenly a harsh teutonic voice split the air.

"You dare, Felix Murphy! Come here!"

Felix thought he would sink through the floor when he heard that voice call his name. Not because it was his name, but because he knew that voice. It belonged to the one man he hated, feared, and respected above all others—Dagmar Schultz. Felix wheeled and prepared to make a dash for the door, providing his rubbery legs would support him that far.

"Lieber Gott! Pe your ears as empty as your head! You—Murphy!"

Felix knew he was licked before he started. He would obey Schultz—he always did; but he resented the thought bitterly. With a sigh he turned and faced the center of the room.

Dagmar Schultz was seated at a small table off to one side of the tavern, a long necked bottle in one hand, and a half-empty glass in the other. He sat hunched forward, his close-cropped head bobbing up and down like a wallowing hog. He was obviously drunk, or close to it.

"Ach so! You finally heard me." He swung one massive arm towards a vacant chair across from him, "Zit down, ve have pizzness to dizcuss!"

Felix was in no mood to incur the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

giant Dutchman's wrath, so he meekly complied and seated himself at the table.

"Tell me, Murphy," Schultz demanded after gazing closely at Felix for a few moments, "your eyes, dey pe goot? You can zee mit dem?"

Felix squinted at Schultz. Why should he care if his eyes were all right? At that moment Felix wasn't at all sure of any of his senses.

"Sure, Mr. Schultz," Felix replied, "sure my eyes are all right—do they look bad?" He raised a fearful hand to his brow and felt around in apprehension.

"Ach, Mein Gott! At a time like zis you ask vor how you feel! Tell me, Murphy," he leaned forward until his alcoholic breath stung Felix's nostrils sharply. "Do you zee anything behind me?"

Felix nearly fell off the chair. Schultz—Dagmar Schultz was actually *asking* him something! Felix felt a sudden glow of importance steal over him. He raised his eyes from the flushed face of the German and glanced over his shoulder. All that met his gaze was the shadowed corner booth in which a man was slowly sipping his beer.

"No, Mr. Schultz," Felix affirmed, "I don't see anything behind you."

"Ah," breathed Schultz in satisfaction, "dat iz goot. Here mine freund, have a trink!" Unsteadily he poured liquid from the long necked bottle into a glass, and handed it to Felix. If there was anything Felix needed at that moment, it was a drink, and he gulped it down greedily. Immediately his throat seemed to burst into flame and he coughed fiercely, reaching for a chaser which wasn't there. Schultz reached over and slapped his back until the coughing subsided. He shook his head in disapproval.

"Teuffel! Put you mos pe a infant!" He reached across the table and refilled Felix's glass. "Trink! It will make a man ov you." But Felix was in no drinking mood at that moment; he was sitting staring over Schultz's shoulder—his eyes popping wildly.

In the dark corner of the room, adjacent to the corner booth, the booth where he had seen a man sipping beer, Felix now saw something move. It was large—too damned large. It had a head like a dragon and was breathing fire and smoke. A long forked tongue flickered out and caressed a vicious looking taloned claw. To Felix it looked like a dragon from some bygone age. Then it dawned on him—it was a dragon! Good Lord! It was a dragon! Something tingled at the base of Felix's spine.

"No—no! It can't be—" whispered Felix, unable to scream as he would have liked to, "it's preposterous—dragons don't exist—it's not there!"

"Tats vat I zay!" rumbled Schultz, banging a huge paw upon the table top, "it iz preposterous—dare iz no dragons I keep zaying—put ten I look pack, und I don't zay anything!"

FELIX felt his knees knock together beneath the table. A lump formed in his throat, threatening to choke him. He was afraid and he didn't care who knew it. With a hoarse croak he staggered to his feet.

"Dondervetter! You pe a vool!" hissed Schultz, grabbing Felix by the arm. "You mos not let him zee you pe a schiken!" But he was too late, for the dragon stopped licking its claws and let out a thundering roar, which oddly enough, nobody seemed to hear except Felix and Schultz. A spear of flame shot from the dilated nostrils, and had not Schultz suddenly pulled Felix down onto his chair, Felix would have been minus a head. As it was, the blast

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

merely singed his hair.

"You zee," remonstrated the German, "you mos pe calm—like me." He glanced around contemptuously at the snorting reptile and took a long pull at his bottle.

"Tose vools over dare," he pointed to the loungers at the bar who were smiling amusedly in their direction, "tey zay I pe zeeing pink elevants! Tey zay I pe dronk—Lieber Gott! Dronk!" He smashed a bulging fist upon the table, setting the glasses trembling. "Put I pe not dronk! Iz it not so—you zee it too!"

Felix wet his lips, shook his head, and passed a hand over his eyes. He even tried closing them for a minute. But the result was always the same. The dragon was still there—jaws slavering, and nostrils spouting fire.

"Oh why did I ever come here," groaned Felix. "I knew something terrible would happen to me—it always does." He looked as if he were about to burst into tears.

"Here," thundered Schultz, poking a glass under Felix's nose. "Trink dis, it vill make a man ov you!" Felix groaned again but took the proferred glass. This time he did not cough.

"I've got to go," muttered Felix, suddenly coming to a decision, "my wife is waiting for me. I'm late for supper—she'll be furious."

"Gott im Himmel!" wheezed Schultz, "mit a dragon vaiting vor to zample his beef, he worries about a vife und zupper!" He leaned across the table. "Dare pe only vun way out ov here alife," he whispered thickly, "ve mos pretent ve pe dronk und dat ve iz not avraid. Dondervetter! I pe not vrightened!" He leaned back in his chair and tilted the bottle. "Now ve go!"

Grabbing Felix by the arm, Schultz staggered to his feet and beat an unsteady path towards the door, singing as loud as he could.

"Ach, du Lieber Augustine, Augustine, Augustine. . . ."

He glanced aside at Felix who was as pale as a ghost.

"Zing you vool! Pehave like you iz dronk!"

Felix, hardly aware of anything, but that there was a very hungry looking dragon following at his heels, began to sing with Schultz in as courageous a voice as he could muster.

Out of the Inn and down the street they staggered, half running, half walking, while behind them, oblivious to passing pedestrians, the dragon clumped after.

A block from home and safety, Felix spied his dog, Pretzels, running towards them. Schultz swore and tried to kick it back, to no avail. Up to, and around Felix ran the dog, straight into the dragon's path. Felix shut his eyes as he saw the gaping jaws close on his unsuspecting pet. Amid the sound of crunching bones, Felix fainted.

"Tamn dis pizzness!" swore Schultz as the limp form of Felix swayed against him. "Tese 'papies have no liver!" He gathered the senseless Felix in his arms and staggered down the block to stop before Felix's house, a low, rambling bungalow.

"Open te door!" thundered Schultz, kicking savagely at the wooden portal, "mos I stand here all night." The latch flew back and a ponderous figure came into view. It was Dora. Her mouth dropped when she saw the unconscious Felix.

"Oh! Felix! — He's dead — Felix, speak to me!" She began to wring her hands and sob alternately.

"He iz not dead," rumbled Schultz in annoyance, "he iz just dronk. Keep te infant to ome after tis—too many dragons around." He dropped Felix unceremoniously upon the threshold,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and muttering to himself, staggered off down the street, the dragon close behind him.

DORA picked up her husband and carried him into a bedroom where she dumped him on a bed. Felix stirred slightly and opened his eyes. For a moment he stared wildly about him, and then, recognizing his surroundings, suddenly began to tremble.

"Quick, Dora," he panted, "bar the door and lock the windows—a dragon is after me!"

"Dragon, my eye — you — you — you're drunk!" She turned away sobbing. "What did I ever do to deserve such a miserable whelp of a husband. While I stay home and work my fingers to the bone, he's out getting himself drunk—and seeing dragons. . . . I'm going home to Mother!" She threw herself into a chair and sobbed. Felix lay quietly on his back and groaned to himself. What was the use! No one would believe him anyway. He almost wished she would go home to her mother—but he knew that mother lived in Ireland. So Felix just lay against his pillow, groaned again, and fell asleep. . . .

The next morning the whole affair seemed like a nightmare. Dragons!—Preposterous! Indeed he must have been drunk. Felix was elated with the thought. It offered him an explanation, and an explanation was what he most desired. He even took his wife's complaints with a mild indifference, and when he left the house for work, he was almost jubilant.

His high spirits faded somewhat when he drew near the water works. A new fear took hold of him. How would Schultz greet him? Would he blame him for the illusion they both had suffered? Would he be fired? Felix felt cold suddenly.

When he checked in and prepared to meet the Dutchman, he was his old self—weak, fearful, and entirely miserable. As he expected, he met Schultz coming around one of the huge vacuum pumps on the east side of the first tier.

"So!" thundered the Dutchman, above the muffled roar of whirring machinery, "it pe you! Und I suppose you expect to faint on dare job like you do on me last night?"

"I-I-I'm sorry about that, Mr. Schultz," Felix stammered, "it must have been the wine—I thought I saw something chasing me." Perspiration was running freely down Felix's neck.

"Oh!" roared Schultz, "So it pe dare vine, eh? Vell look you over dare!" He raised a ham-like fist and pointed to a shadowy corner of the room.

Felix followed the direction with his eyes, and suddenly felt sick. There, in the shadow of a huge dynamo, calmly licking a taloned claw with its forked tongue, was the dragon, fire and smoke curling lazily from its nostrils. Had Felix needed any other incentive to faint, that would have been it. But he did not faint. He couldn't find the courage to.

"Please, Mr. Schultz," Felix whined, "my wife is terribly sick—I—I can't work today—I've got to stay home with her."

"Ome iz it! Dondervetter! Put you von't go ome. You vill stay und like it—jus like I do all last night! He pe yours vor today!" He clinched the argument with one of his massive fists, shaking it threateningly beneath Felix's nose. It was argument enough for Felix, who readily agreed.

"Goot!" snapped Schultz, "You vill keep it company now vile I go about my pizzness." He stomped away and disappeared in the shadows of the pumps.

Felix went to work in a daze, checking dials, gauges, and vacuum pres-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

sures. He could not think straight, and he didn't want to anyway. All he knew, and cared about was that a dragon—a huge, ugly, and fearsome dragon, was watching him covertly from the shadows behind him.

At lunch time Felix began to feel genuinely frightened. The dragon was getting restless—and undoubtedly hungry. Its jaws slavored when it caught scent of Felix's meagre meal, and it crept forward steadily. Felix lost what little appetite he had possessed.

ALL afternoon the dragon kept moving closer to Felix, and Felix kept watching those jaws—imagining what would happen if they ever closed about him. An hour before quitting time the dragon was little more than ten feet from Felix, and the heat of its fiery breath made him sweat. For once Felix wished that Dagmar Schultz would show up—but not once did the Dutchman make his appearance.

When the whistle blew at 5:30, Felix was ready for a straight-jacket. His teeth chattered so hard he lost a gold inlay. His tongue was dry as a bone, and he could not breath. Something thumped in his throat. Felix felt for his heart—where it should have been, but felt nothing. He was afraid to feel around his neck.

As he moved down the street towards the Dragon's Head Inn, which he had to pass before he could reach home, Felix felt the incinerating breath of the monster grow close upon his back. He walked faster, but the blast grew hotter. Then he ran.

Ahead loomed the tavern, and Felix, not aware why he did it, plunged through the swinging doors. A momentary survey of the room revealed Schultz, standing at the far end of the crowded bar, a glass in one hand, and a long necked bottle in the other. Felix let out a screech and rushed over to him.

"Mr. Schultz! Help me!—Its after me—do something!" Felix practically threw himself upon the Dutchman as he reached the bar.

"Mein Gott!" thundered Schultz, "vot bees wrong? Ach, it pe tat dragon. Teuffel! Vat you need iz a trink." With unsteady hands he poured liquid into a glass and shoved it before Felix. "Ah," purred the German as he saw the wine disappear into the eager mouth of Felix. "Now, you veel better?" Felix nodded, but kept one eye on the dragon which sat near the tavern door.

Snickers arose from the far portion of the bar, and eyes glanced amusedly in the direction of Felix and Schultz. The Dutchman grew furious.

"Te pigs! Tey tink I pe dronk! Gott!—put I haff idea!" He leaned towards Felix and whispered in his ear. "Tomorrow ve will show dem—ve will put zom vine into te vasser pumps! Hah! ye vill zee den who iz dronk!" He leaned back and roared. Felix stood apalled.

"No! No—we can't do that," gasped Felix, "it would be murder—the whole city would be overrun with hungry monsters!"

"So!" echoed Schultz, "Dat iz goot! Te pigs vill be all eaten up!—Put I haff a goot idea vor zeze pigs here," he glanced meaningly at the bar customers. "Hah! Tey vill make a goot meal—now!" Felix was too stunned to fathom the meaning of his words. Schultz suddenly smashed a huge fist upon the bar and bellowed:

"Te trinks iz on te ouse! Vill op!" He slid the long necked bottle along the bar and eager hands grabbed for it. Within a minute the contents were drained and glasses were clinking

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

merrily. Someone offered a toast. "Heres (hic) to the Duschman, an his blasted monsters!"

Schultz threw back his head and roared. "Yah! To my monsters! Hah —pigs! Look around—vat do you zee?"

The crash of breaking glass broke the sudden silence following Schultz's outburst. Then a gasp went up from the men grouped at the bar. Some crossed themselves, some fainted; while others began to edge towards the door.

"Now who iz zober!" Schultz bellowed; and then Felix suddenly grabbed his arm.

"Look out, Mr. Schultz—it's coming at you! Run!" Felix dove behind the bar.

"Dondervetter! Vat iz!" But he got no further. With a rafter shaking roar the dragon came at him, nostrils spouting fire and smoke. Men scattered like leaves in the path of a rushing wind. Some reached the door, but most of them fainted where they stood. Schultz didn't have time to faint. He ducked, but a sweeping slash of the dragon's mighty tail caught him around the neck, and he fell like a stunned ox. The enraged monster then proceeded to tear the Inn apart. Chairs, tables, booths, — even walls, fell beneath its fury.

Felix, trembling behind the bar, decided that something must be done. He wished he knew exactly what. That he would be the next victim, he assured himself, revolting as the thought was. He knew—that unless the monster could be somehow stopped—he would be dead within two minutes.

FELIX loved life—even though he had found few of its joys. He loved life even more than he feared the dragon. He considered both of them evils, but he chose the weaker of the two. Glancing upwards, he suddenly spotted the gleaming, double-edged sword hanging from the wall above the bar. An idea sprouted in his mind.

In a single leap, Felix gained the top of the bar, and grabbed the massive blade from its moorings. It was heavy —almost too heavy, but Felix had little time to consider its weight; for, the dragon, suddenly spying him from across the length of the shattered room, let out a tremendous roar and thundered at the bar.

Felix felt exhilarated. He welcomed the charge of the monster with as spirited a war-hoop as he could muster, and swung the weapon in a huge circle over his head.

The wide-open jaws were less than three feet away when Felix acted. In a silver streak, the whirling blade rushed to meet the dragon's head. The keen edge bit deep, carried on by its own momentum. It came away dripping red.

The beast howled in pain and retreated in surprise. But not for long. Uttering a savage scream of mad fury, the dragon again hurled itself upon Felix. But Felix was ready. Again the massive blade arced downwards, and this time it was not to be denied. Through scaly hide, muscle, bone and flesh it tore, and when it met no further resistance, the dragon's head rolled upon the floor, and the steel was dyed a deep crimson.

Felix looked upon his work and shuddered. Then he straightened up in pride. He! He—Felix Murphy—weak, fearful, miserable Felix Murphy, had done that! A wave of exultation swept over him. Weak? Fearful? Heck no! He was a dragon killer! A modern St. George!

Felix leapt from the bar and surveyed the shambles about him. A group of men lay huddled together near the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

door in a dead faint. There was not a single piece of furniture left whole in the entire room. The body of the dragon still twitched.

Felix glanced at Dagmar Schultz, lying unconscious by the bar. Dagmar Schultz! Important, commanding, domineering—Dagmar Schultz! Felix had an idea that all that would be changed from now on.

A warm feeling spread over him, and he expanded his chest proudly. From now on he would give the orders! Stepping lightly to the bar, placing a foot upon the prone body of Schultz, and thumping the red blade loudly upon the slick surface; Felix, in as commanding a voice as he could summon, r o a r e d: "Bartender! BARTENDER!"

THE END

ARAUCANIAN MYTH

by H. R. STANTON

THE Araucanians believed that their dead went to a country called Gulcheman, "the dwelling of the men beyond the mountains." The relatives of the deceased person wept for some time around the body which was placed on a raised bier overnight. They watched over it, and ate and drank with all those who came to console them. The ceremony was called "curicahuin" which meant black entertainment. After three days, the body was taken to the family burying grounds. The procession to the eltum, "cemetery," was led by two young men on horseback riding at top speed. The bier was carried by the relatives who wept loudly. The corpse was laid on the ground, surrounded by weapons, if it was a man, or supplied with feminine apparel if it was a woman. Food and even horses were supplied the deceased for use in the Otherworld. The Pehuenches warmed the corpse with fire for they believed the Otherworld was cold. After they warmed the body, they tied it to a horse, and placed the reins in his hands. Then they killed the horse and buried them both in the same grave. They covered them with stones and poured chica over them. After they all went home, they believed that an old woman named Tempuleague came to the grave as a whale to take the spirit away to the Otherworld.

THE GIFT OF THE NILE

by CARTER T. WAINWRIGHT

THE NILE River has its source in Lake Victoria Nyanza, near the equator in Africa, and flows from one end of Egypt to the other. It flows north for 4,000 miles and into the Mediterranean Sea. When the early Egyptians wanted to travel they usually went by boat. The river was always crowded with boats from every country of the ancient world. There were enormous barges carrying huge building blocks for the temples. There were passenger boats, freight and cattle boats, fishing boats and warships, and pleasure craft for the wealthy noblemen. The travel boats were made of the best wood and were elaborately decorated. They had large brilliant sails and lovely cabins and musicians on board to entertain the owner. A pilot stood in the front of the boat with a testing pole to determine the depth of the water. This was necessary because the river was full of constantly shifting sandbanks. He signaled directions to the steersman in the back of the boat. When there was no wind, rowers took over. Luggage was kept on top of the cabin and cooking was done in the kitchen boat that was towed along behind.

As the Nile flows through Egypt it is flanked by the most fertile fields in the world, and beyond them are mountains and then desert. As it seldom rains in Egypt, these fields would be useless if it were not for the Nile. That is why they are called "the gift of the Nile." Every year there are heavy rains at the source of the Nile which swells the river higher and higher till it finally overflows its banks flooding the land on each side. When the water recedes, it leaves behind a layer of rich mud brought all the way from Abyssinia. This is such fertile earth that crops grow easily. The very ancient Egyptians worshipped the Nile, and placed statues of the Nile god, Hapi, in little shrines along the river.

* * *

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Shadow for Sale

by Chester S. Geier

Doreen wanted money, fame, and all the glamour that went with them. But she had to pay a price, and the price was—

THE hall was high and wide, and soft lights underscored its atmosphere of quiet luxury. Doreen's awed gaze brought her an impression of thick rugs and lustrous wood, of gilt and gleaming marble. Excitement rose in her, bringing with it a sudden, hungry yearning. She felt herself on the threshold of a new world, and desperately she wanted to cross, to leave the poverty and obscurity of the past forever behind.

She moistened lips whose perfect contours had been emphasized by the painstakingly careful application of makeup, and momentarily her long-lashed, amber eyes narrowed. This, she told herself, was her chance. She had been warned that the road to success was long and rough, but her presence amid these expensive surroundings meant she had already traveled a major part of that road. If she played her hand right, a chauffeur-driven limousine would take her the rest of the way.

Realizing that her expression had become calculating and hard, Doreen deliberately smoothed her features and glanced at Pryor. He hadn't noticed. He was handing his topcoat to the butler, who already held her wrap. Then he turned and was striding toward her with a grin.

Rick Pryor was nice, she decided, really one of the nicest men she had met since she began her modeling career. He made her feel like an old friend instead of a beautiful girl who had constantly to be on guard. He was amusing and humorous, yet quiet and somehow grave. His tall figure, as he approached, looked straight and trim in immaculate evening clothes. His features were interesting rather than handsome. He had deep-set gray eyes, heavy, dark brows that had a slightly quizzical tilt, and broad, mobile lips below a severely straight nose. His dark brown hair had a crisp wave and showed faint traces of gray at the temples.

Doreen recalled how surprised she had been when Pryor asked her to attend the dinner party with him. She had hardly expected that she would ever become a guest of Whitney Picket, the wealthy manufacturer of Velvoderm beauty preparations. She had posed for a series of pictures advertising Velvoderm products, and it had been in connection with her work that she had met Pryor. He was a junior executive of the advertising firm that handled the Velvoderm account.

"Picket likes the way our advertising has increased Velvoderm sales, and he's making with the eats and drinks by way of celebration," Pryor had explained, speaking of the dinner party.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As Doreen looked into her mirror it seemed as if a dark shadow loomed up behind her . . .

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I'm sure he'd be delighted to meet you. He liked those pictures you posed for—liked them even better when he heard they went over in a big way. With Picket rooting for you, my girl, you're certain to become a famous model. Besides the agency big-wigs, there'll be a lot of other important people at the party, and they'll take up where Picket leaves off. Unless I miss my guess, the model bureau you work for is going to be swamped with calls for your services."

NOW Pryor came to a stop before her, and his grin took on an overtone of concern. "Nervous?"

Doreen shook her head. "No—just a little hysterical."

"A waste of nervous energy, my girl. Picket and the others have most likely inhaled too many cocktails to be critical. Relax. Remember what they taught you at modeling school. Or did you attend one?"

"Yes. I won the chance in a beauty contest."

"I don't think you could have had much competition—if any." Pryor looked down at her a moment, the quizzical tilt to his brows more pronounced. His teasing expression was somehow over-shadowed by a kind of grim seriousness. "There ought to be a law against beauty like yours. It's impossible, outrageous — unearthly. You leave plainer girls without a last shred of glamor to cling to."

Doreen wrinkled her nose. "That's the effect of the Velvoderm stuff I've been using—soap, cream, lotion, and all the rest. Guess I'd better stop."

"On second thought, don't," Pryor said. "Men would never know what they're missing if you did." He took her arm and guided her toward a broad archway at the right end of the hall. "Let's make the grand entrance. Easy does it. Just pretend you're showing off a new dress to a bunch of customers."

As they neared the archway, Doreen saw that a huge living room lay beyond. It was a luxurious room, so stunningly and lavishly decorated that it seemed more like the background for an expensive movie rather than real life. Groups of people in evening dress were scattered about, and above the hum of their voices came occasional bursts of laughter.

Doreen's pulses were racing. Here was the wealth and culture of which she had always dreamed. She wanted to clutch it to her as a small girl might have clutched a beautiful doll.

Just within the entrance, she felt Pryor's hand tighten on her arm, bringing her to a stop. She heard the murmur of his voice in her ear.

"All right, now, go into your act. Give them the works."

She took a sophisticated pose of the type which she had been taught was the style. It was a pose calculated to show off her gown and her slim, rounded figure to best advantage. She smiled slightly, glancing around the room with languid slowness. The knowledge that she was very beautiful beat through her with a heady confidence. She knew what an arresting picture she made with her gold evening dress, her reddish-gold hair, and her gold-tinted skin. Even her gloves were gold, as was the mesh bag she held, and the slippers on her tiny feet.

She heard the mutter of voices falter and partially die away as eyes swung in her direction. She saw the admiring, eager glances of the men, the startled, envious and resentful looks of the women. She had a sudden feeling of exaltation, of power.

"Atta girl!" she heard Pryor whisper.

A short, portly man with blunt,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ruddy features and thin gray hair brushed carefully over his shining scalp detached himself from one of the groups and hurried across the room. Doreen recognized Whitney Picket almost immediately from the newspaper pictures she had seen of him. Picket was grinning with a kind of astonished delight. Even before he spoke it was obvious that he had had too many cocktails.

"Rick, my boy! It's good to see you. A pleasure, indeed." Picket wrung Pryor's hand briefly, his pale eyes on Doreen. "And this is Miss Sutton? Of course, of course! You're even lovelier than your pictures, my dear. In fact, they hardly do you justice."

Taking Doreen's arm possessively, Picket led her into the room. He kept up a running fire of talk as he introduced her to the other guests. The faces and names, mingled with Picket's effusive remarks, made a kaleidoscopic confusion in Doreen's mind. She wanted almost desperately to remember the more important persons, and she felt annoyed with the manufacturer.

THE announcement of dinner a short time later gave her a respite from Picket's attentions. Seating arrangements were such that she found herself between Pryor and a small, sad-faced man whose name, she managed to recall, was Louis Brissac. The latter was thin, with a long nose and large eyes that looked tired and disillusioned. He had a shock of grizzled hair that somehow made her think of Einstein.

Pryor seemed on familiar terms with Brissac. "Lou's a photographer," he explained. "One of the best in the business. And he knows it, too. The prices he charges for his work are nothing short of robbery."

"Robbery!" Brissac was humorously indignant. "My friend, a masterpiece is simply not a masterpiece unless it is paid for according to its worth."

Pryor winked at Doreen. "Lou's convinced he's a Michaelangelo of the lens."

"I admit it," Brissac said. "In this world of cut-throat competition, one must beat one's own drums." He grinned at Doreen and then fell to an appraising study of her face. "Miss Sutton, it strikes me that you are a subject worthy of my talents. Perfect features, unusual coloring. You must let me do a camera study of you some time. In color."

"Business or pleasure?" Pryor demanded with a mock-sinister air.

"Pleasure, of course," Brissac explained quickly. "With Miss Sutton as a model, it would be impossible to think of business."

"Thank you," Doreen said. "I consider myself properly flattered."

Brissac resumed his study of her, and the sadness seemed to deepen in his face. "I believe you're new to the game, Miss Sutton."

"Yes. I've been modeling only about six months."

"Ah. Then perhaps it isn't too late."

Doreen stared. "Too late?"

Brissac nodded with a curious grimness. "Exactly. By allowing pictures to be made of them, models such as yourself are placed in deadly danger—a danger out of all proportion to the profit involved."

"Oh, oh!" Pryor said. "Here it comes again. Lou is going into his favorite song and dance."

"I'm afraid I don't see how modeling could be dangerous," Doreen said.

"But it is," Brissac insisted. "The danger lies in posing for photographs. It may seem strange that I, a photographer, should speak this way. Yet it is exactly the experience I've had in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

my profession that convinces me I am right." He leaned closer, his voice low and his eyes intense. "Miss Sutton, perhaps you've heard of savages who, apparently out of superstition, refused to permit explorers to take pictures of them. It wasn't superstition. Those savages knew a deep truth—a truth to which civilized people, with their strongly materialistic attitude, have deliberately blinded themselves. The idea behind their refusal to pose for pictures was that a portion of their souls would remain with their photographic duplicates. A fantastic idea, you will say. Some people have had pictures taken of them for years without anything strange happening to them. Movie stars, for example. But the fact is that nothing strange seems to happen—unless you know exactly what happens, what symptoms to look for."

"What do you mean?" Doreen asked, impressed despite herself by Brissac's earnestness.

"Well, to continue with movie stars as an example, you've no doubt noticed how they come and go. A new face, a brief spurt to fame—and then obscurity. The public has lost interest. And why? It's because these stars have lost something they had in the beginning—a certain vitality, a certain charm and freshness. In other words, their souls have been drained, leaving them, to all practical purposes, empty shells.

"Many stars remain in the business for dozens of years, of course. Their popularity doesn't seem to fade. Perhaps it's that they have greater depth of soul than others. Or perhaps they have learned to act so well, to pretend under all circumstances, that they are able to cover up their deficiencies."

"Anyway, modeling isn't like acting in the movies," Doreen reminded.

"Yet the same thing happens, even if on a smaller scale," Brissac said. "I know. I've seen them rise and fade, the handsome boys and the lovely girls. I've seen them arrive, fresh and eager. I've seen them go, vain and hardened, cynical and often cruel. You may say that money and fame have spoiled them—but the truth is that they have lost something precious. The picture-making business is like a hungry demon, feasting on the souls of its victims and tossing the empty husks aside."

DOREEN grimaced. "You make it sound so unpleasant."

"It is, Miss Sutton. And that is why I say to you, get out of modeling before it's too late. Marry some nice man and settle down. Make him a home and have children. This is the only way to true happiness, for you will be preserving everything inside you that is decent and good."

"But suppose I prefer to remain a model?"

"Then you will become a shell—an automaton. You will still be beautiful, though in a different way. You will still talk and move and smile. But a large and important part of you will be gone. For I tell you in all the deepest sincerity that it is impossible to sell the shadow and keep the substance, as you obviously believe. With each picture you permit to be made, you will actually be giving away a little piece of your soul. Bit by bit, until all true humanity is gone."

"Cut it out, Lou," Pryor growled suddenly. "You're scaring the kid."

"I want to scare her," Brissac said. "And I know, friend Rick, that you agree with my purpose deep down inside you. You agree for exactly the reason that you chose Miss Sutton as your partner tonight. There are any number of other models who would

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have jumped at the chance of a date with you. But you chose Miss Sutton, because she has something they are beginning to lose."

Pryor said nothing further for a moment. He frowned down at his plate, then glanced again at Brissac. "I've heard those ideas of yours pretty often lately, Lou. Why do you remain in the photography racket if you feel that way?"

The other jerked his thin shoulders in a shrug. "It's all I know. I'm caught in a system. But for that matter, I'm not doing any more harm than other shutter artists. I seldom take pictures of the same people more than once. My conscience is clear enough."

Brissac returned his attention to Doreen. "I hope you will forgive me if I have frightened you, Miss Sutton. But I do want you to keep my warning in mind. There is a deep truth in it—truth of a type the world at present ignores."

"I won't forget," Doreen said. "It's nice of you to be so concerned about me."

But as the evening wore on, Brissac's words slipped into the back of her mind, remaining only as a vaguely unpleasant memory. She became the center of attraction for an admiring group of men, and she became lost in the task of making herself as interesting and full of charm as she possibly could.

Afterward, measuring her efforts in terms of her career, she knew she had been successful. Calls for her services as a model increased, as did the fees she received. She moved out of the small apartment, which she had been sharing with two other girls, and into one of her own, much larger and more expensive.

Men who were all wealthy and important in one way or another became her escorts. She grew as familiar with luxurious homes and exclusive night spots as she was with her own face. Her meteoric ascent became the envy and despair of other models. Her little idiosyncrasies of dress or makeup created new fads. Her endorsements increased the sales of such items as cigarettes and toothpaste. Her name was linked romantically in gossip columns, and her presence at parties and social gatherings often spelled the difference between publicity and the lack of it.

AT INTERVALS she ran into Brissac, who kept repeating the warning he had given her at Picket's dinner party. She gradually found herself trying to avoid him. His persistence irritated her. She tried to tell herself there was no truth in his words, but a doubt somehow remained.

She saw Pryor occasionally, when she could find time away from dates with more influential men. She had not dismissed him to a back seat in her mind. On the contrary, her liking for him had steadily grown. For her increasing experience with men gave her the opportunity to compare and weigh, and she found that Pryor's good qualities were seldom if ever equalled. He never failed to be understanding and kind. She knew his feelings toward her had reached the serious stage, but he did not seem to be hurt or resentful over being neglected.

"You've become quite a celebrity," Pryor remarked during one of the rare evenings she was able to spend with him. "I've been reading about you in the papers and seeing your pictures in the best magazines. How does it feel?"

"Swell," Doreen said. She glanced around the small but popular night-club in which they were sitting, aware that numerous persons were watching her. "It's what I've always wanted—

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fame, beautiful clothes and surroundings, being acquainted with important people. You see, Dick, my parents were terribly poor. My father was in an accident when I was still very young, and he was never well after that. I used to be horribly envious of other kids, who had things I was unable to have. I told myself I would do anything to get what I wanted. If my chance ever came, I would take everything I could get my hands on."

"Your chance has come, Doreen."

"Not quite. This is only the beginning. You see, Rick, I've had an offer from Hollywood."

"Hollywood!" he gasped.

She nodded quietly. "I'm holding out until they meet my terms. I want a lot more money than they're offering me."

Pryor stared at her a moment longer, then slowly transferred his gaze to the glowing tip of his cigarette. Doreen touched his hand questioningly.

"You don't seem glad, Rick."

"I'm not."

"Why?"

"I guess it's that I don't like the idea of having you go away."

"But I'll still see you once in a while, Rick."

"That isn't quite what I meant."

Pryor hesitated and was about to continue, when a visitor stopped at the table, forestalling him. Doreen felt an abrupt dismay as she saw that it was Brissac.

The photographer was smiling in his sad and tired way. "I hope I am not intruding."

"You know darned well you are," Pryor growled. "But since you're here, you might as well sit down."

"Your manners are delightful, friend Rick." Brissac drew up a chair. "Now, what were we talking about? Romance, perhaps?"

"Romance!" Pryor snorted. "Doreen's running out on me."

"Ah! A rival?"

"Hollywood. Doreen's dickering with the movie moguls, and I'd say the odds are in favor that they'll meet her terms."

Brissac looked at Doreen and shook his head slowly. "It's the worst thing that could possibly happen. I hope you haven't chosen to ignore my warnings. I meant them, you know. I wasn't playing a clumsy joke."

"They seemed so fantastic," Doreen murmured, fighting to remain calm.

"The truth often seems fantastic—but that doesn't make it any less true," Brissac said. He leaned forward, a desperate earnestness twisting his face. "Doreen, keep away from Hollywood. Get out of the picture business entirely. You're in danger of losing a large part of the most precious thing you have—your soul. Nothing you can possibly get in a material way can make up for it. Wealth and fame are just soap bubbles compared to what you have inside you."

Doreen forced a laugh. "How do I know I have a soul in the first place? I've never seen one. Nobody has that I've heard of."

"That doesn't mean you don't have one," Brissac insisted. "Proof of a thing doesn't necessarily lay in the ability to see and handle it."

DOREEN'S amber eyes blazed with the anger she could no longer control. "I don't intend to argue with you! As far as I'm concerned, this nonsense has gone far enough. I want you to stop annoying me. What I do is entirely my own business. If you think I'd give up a Hollywood career because of your silly ideas, you'd better guess again."

Brissac looked stunned. "I'm sorry.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I was only trying to help. It didn't occur to me that I might be annoying you. But you can be certain it won't happen again." Nodding to Pryor, he rose stiffly and strode away.

Pryor was frowning. "That wasn't like you, Doreen. You should have known Lou meant well."

"I'm just tired and irritable, I guess. I've been working too hard and going out too much." She made a sudden gesture. "Let's get out of here, Rick."

In her apartment Doreen mixed drinks and dropped into a deep chair. Across from her Pryor gazed musingly into his glass. He had turned on the radio, and the music of an orchestra flooded softly through the sleek, modernistic room. Only a few lamps were lighted, but a cozy atmosphere was somehow lacking.

"What are you thinking about, Rick?"

"About you."

"Should I feel flattered?"

"I'm afraid not, Doreen. You see, I've been thinking that you've changed. You've become a little less sweet . . . a little too impatient with people."

"You aren't hinting that Lou Brissac might be right?"

"Not in a certain way. I don't know about that. But I think he's right about one thing. I wish you would get out of the modeling business. I wish you would keep away from Hollywood."

"But what else could I do?"

"You might marry me." Pryor leaned forward with suddenly increased earnestness. "I meant it, Doreen. I've been in love with you for a long time. I have enough money put away, and we could buy a small home somewhere out of the city. I've always wanted to—"

The telephone rang. Doreen picked up the receiver, spoke briefly, and listened. She spoke again, her voice breathless and excited. Her features were radiant when she finally hung up and returned to Pryor.

"Rick—I'm in! My terms have been accepted. They want me to come to Hollywood."

He said slowly, "And the offer I made you?"

"It was sweet of you, Rick. But please try to understand. This is an opportunity I've been hoping for. I couldn't pass it up."

"I don't suppose you could." Pryor put down his glass and rose. "I know when I'm licked. Guess I'll be running along. You'll have packing to do, and a lot of other details to look after."

"That can wait a little. Let's go somewhere and celebrate, Rick."

"There's nothing to celebrate, Doreen."

She searched his face, her enthusiasm draining. "Rick—are you angry with me?"

"No. I'm afraid for you. I don't want you to change any more than you have already. But I'll be hoping for the best." He touched her cheek and managed a grin. "So long—and good luck." Then he turned, picked up his hat and coat, and strode toward the hall. The door closed quietly behind him.

Doreen gazed after him for some moments, her emotions clashing. She was puzzled and at the same time hurt and indignant. She thought of Pryor's last words and wondered if he could have had Brissac's warning in mind. A chill touched her.

And then she shrugged, her indignation predominating. She hurried toward the telephone. Rick could act as stiff-necked as he pleased. If he wouldn't help her celebrate, there were other men who would. . . .

A group of them later saw her off on the train. Pryor was not present, but her disappointment was submerged in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the excitement she felt at what lay ahead.

HOLLYWOOD . . . the glamor and tinsel glitter of the motion picture industry. Huge sets and glaring Kleig lights. Scripts and shooting schedules. Famous names and faces superimposed against a background of lush nightclubs and lavish parties.

Doreen was caught up in it and became a part of it. She bought a large home and had a swimming pool built. She hired servants and drove a luxurious roadster. Her clothes and jewelry were especially designed for her by the most exclusive shops.

She starred in musicals and light comedies. She played a number of straight dramatic roles. Her pictures were moderately successful—or at least they brought the usual reactions from a public ingrained with the habit of attending movies and somehow conditioned not to be too critical. She received the usual publicity in magazine articles and newspaper gossip columns, some of it gushy, some of it barbed. She had the usual quarrels and feuds with other stars.

All in all, she had the usual type of Hollywood career. A nova-like blaze of prominence—and then a slow fade-out. After four years she suddenly awoke to the fact that she was treading a downhill path to obscurity. Good parts had become more and more rare, assignments fewer and farther between. Finally the studio refused to renew her contract.

She tried other studios, but they were interested only in new faces. She hung on for a while. She took bit parts. She dismissed her servants, sold her house and car. She moved into a modest apartment and hoped—as so many had hoped before her—for the chance of a comeback.

The bit parts dwindled. People had somehow completely lost interest in her. In the end she returned East.

She tried the model bureaus first, but she was told she wasn't the type now in vogue. She obtained small roles in a number of plays. She sang in a night club. After a while she managed to land an unimportant but steady spot on a radio show.

She was working at this when she saw Pryor again. He was waiting for her in the hall when she left the radio studio one evening.

"Rick!" she cried. "I can hardly believe it's you."

He was grinning, but his eyes showed an odd reserve. They seemed to measure and search from a distance. "I heard you were working here, and thought I'd look you up. Shall we go some place where we can talk?"

"That'll be swell, Rick."

A few minutes later they sat facing each other across a table in a small restaurant. Doreen felt a strange shyness. It was something she had never expected to feel again.

"What have you been doing with yourself, Rick?"

"Writing books—believe it or not. It's something I've always wanted to do."

"Novels?"

He nodded. "I'm working on the third one now. According to my royalty checks, the last two went over surprisingly well, and my publishers have been begging for more. They claim our civilization needs a moral reawakening. What I've been doing in my books, you see, is preaching against the general rottenness caused by advertising and movies."

"But why that, Rick?"

"Because of the way they tear people down."

She looked away, her mouth twist-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

She ran wildly, in utter terror, and the night seemed to reach out for her . . .

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing. "I suppose you're thinking of me. I know I haven't been much of a success."

"Maybe I was thinking about you, Doreen. Maybe I was thinking about a dozen other people I've known, who went down in the dizzy chase after quick fame and easy money."

Pryor went on, and in some way he managed to steer the conversation into impersonal channels. Doreen began to feel more relaxed and at ease. She felt her old liking for Pryor return—this time with a new, strange intensity. She realized abruptly that she had been in love with him all along, and she told herself that she had been a fool to refuse the opportunity he had once offered her. A hand seemed to clutch at her heart as she wondered if it was too late. She decided to find out.

HER chance came during a moment when something of the old intimacy between them flashed once more into existence. She leaned forward, placing her hand on Pryor's wrist.

"Rick, I haven't forgotten that night you proposed to me. I've thought of it often. There were times when I hated myself for having turned you down." She tensed herself—and took the fatal plunge. "Rick—I made myself a promise. I promised I wouldn't turn you down if you proposed a second time."

He looked down at his empty cup. He was silent. There was a stillness about him somehow deathly.

Despair welled up in Doreen—despair and grief. She knew she had lost even before Pryor moved or spoke.

"I'm sorry, Doreen. I don't intend to propose a second time. I came to the studio this evening, hoping that you hadn't changed, that you were still the Doreen I remembered. But you had changed. Hollywood had taken something away from you." He paused, hesitating. And then his words came in a sudden rush. "Doreen, I've often wondered about those things Lou Brissac said. Now I think . . . I'm sure he was right."

A sudden thunder beat in her ears. There was a distorting mist before her eyes. She was aware of this somehow, though afterward she had no clear recollection of the next few moments. She had only the nightmare-like memory of snatching up her purse and gloves, of bumping into chairs and tables in her blind flight out into the darkness and solitude of the street, running wildly amid great sobs that shook her body as a gale shakes a tree. Then she walked. She didn't know how long she walked. But she remembered in a blurred way that she was exhausted when finally she reached her tiny kitchenette apartment and threw herself across the bed.

The days and weeks that followed took on a bleak emptiness. She did not see Pryor again. She knew he had gone forever from her life. But there were other men. They were not the type of men whose requests for dates she would have accepted under other circumstances. Now, however, she no longer cared. She was willing to grasp at anything that would cast even a momentary glow upon the drab, meaningless pattern into which her life had become woven. She threw herself into a frantic search for happiness.

The search led her on a constant round of nightclubs and wild parties. She drank too much, and her health suffered, affecting her voice. It was this as much as her growing indifference to her job that finally resulted in her dismissal from the radio studio.

She sang in nightclubs again, though now the difficulties with her voice limited her to the more cheap and tawdry

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

places. She knew it was the end. And she prepared for it. The bottle of sleeping pills was easy to obtain.

She was holding the bottle one evening as she stared at her reflection in her dressing room mirror. For a moment she had doubted that she would be able to go through with it. But now, looking at her image in the glass, she realized there was nothing else left to do. For she *had* changed. She was no longer even pretty—merely attractive in a hard, sophisticated way. She was thinner than she had ever been. The golden tint in her skin and hair had faded. There were lines in her face that hadn't been present before.

She thought of herself as she had looked that night at Whitney Picket's dinner party—and sudden grief rushed over her. She dropped her head on her arms, and the bottles on the dressing table rattled faintly with the force of her sobs. She was unaware that someone had entered the room until a voice spoke behind her.

"Why, Miss Sutton, what's the matter?"

It was Lucy, the wardrobe mistress. The old woman held a gown which she had repaired for Doreen, and her wrinkled features, framed in untidy gray hair, were twisted with concern.

"Nothing, Lucy." Doreen wiped her eyes quickly.

"You wouldn't be crying over nothing." Lucy laid the gown across a chair and regarded Doreen from faded, wise eyes. "You aren't happy, that's what. I've known it for a long time."

DOREEN returned the older woman's glance a moment. There was something odd about Lucy that she had never been able to explain. A sort of furtive, watching quality. But Lucy was kind and sympathetic enough, and sympathy was what Doreen wanted now more than anything else. She found herself blurting out her story, telling Lucy of her rise to wealth and fame and of her tragic descent back into obscurity.

The old woman studied Doreen thoughtfully. "You'd like to be famous and have money again, wouldn't you?"

"More than anything else in the world! But look at me!" Doreen threw out her hands in a gesture of despair. "How could I get them back the way I look now?"

"There's a way." Lucy reached into her wrinkled smock and produced a card. "Just call up this number. Tell *him* you want to make an appointment."

"But who is it, Lucy? How can he help me?"

"*He* can help you. I know. I'm working for him. That's why I'm here—watching for people like you."

"I . . . I don't understand. What is this all about?"

"You want to be beautiful again. You want to be famous and have money. You can get all that by calling up this number. *He* can help you. There's a price, of course. The price is . . . your soul." Lucy placed the card carefully upon the dressing table and walked quietly from the room.

It wasn't until several minutes had passed that Doreen finally understood. And somehow, amid the waves of shuddering cold that washed over her, she found herself thinking of Brissac.

She knew there was no remaining avenue of hope, but two days passed before she called the number on the card. A deep voice spoke from the receiver at her ear.

"You wish to make an appointment?"

". . . Yes—yes!"

"Are you prepared to pay the price?"

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Yes."

"Your name?"

"Doreen . . . Doreen Sutton."

"Just a moment, please, while I look through my files."

She waited. The fear had drained from her. She felt something that was almost eagerness. She thought of herself being beautiful and compelling again, having lovely things to wear and a fine apartment to live in. She thought of herself being famous again, drawing the attentions of important men—men like Rick Pryor. Her heart seemed to beat in her throat, making it difficult to breathe.

She could have all these things once more. The price was her soul. Brissac had been right. But now it did not seem too great a price to pay.

The deep voice came back. "I am sorry, Miss Sutton. My records show that it would serve no practical purpose to make a bargain with you."

"But . . . but what is wrong?"

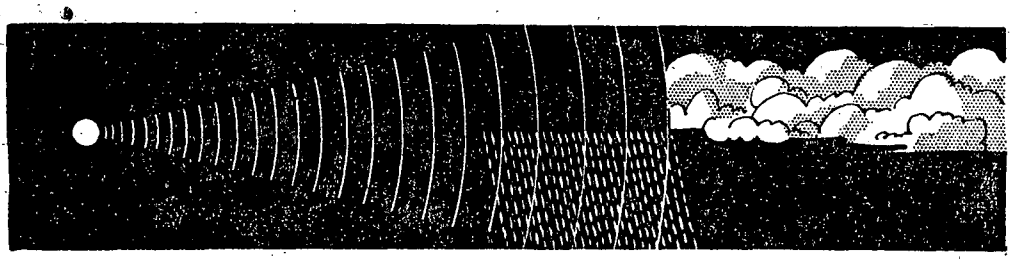
"Your activities of the past several years indicate that your soul no longer possesses the required vitality. It has been . . . exhausted, we might say. I am sorry. Good-bye."

The receiver clicked with a note of finality.

After a long moment Doreen hung up. She crossed the living room slowly, moving with a bleak, trance-like deliberation. She took the bottle of sleeping pills from her purse. Then she filled a glass with water at the sink in the tiny kitchenette.

Standing before the living room windows and staring blindly into the gathering dusk outside, she began to swallow the pills one by one.

THE END



SUPERSOUND PUT TO WORK

by FRANCES YERXA

OUR daily lives are going to be more and more affected by sounds. This invisible force has proven itself capable of destroying nearly every enemy of mankind, from bacteria to animal and insect pest. Sound may also cure as well as kill, and at present it is being tested in the treatment of cancer. A mathematician who was exposed to high-frequency sound waves for an hour was so mentally shaken that she couldn't do even the most simple math problem. A chemist who worked so much with ultrasound, lost his sense of balance for a few days. Men who were experimenting with sirens became so nauseated that they couldn't continue. These sirens had knocked the birds out of the sky.

Sound is a series of vibrations. By waving your hand in the air you produce vibrations in the air that are so slow that you cannot hear them, because the human ear can't pick up sounds of less than 16 vibrations per second nor sounds of over 16,000 vibrations per second. Our range of hearing is so limited that we hear but a fraction of all the sounds. Birds and insects have a limited range but theirs is of a much higher pitch. Birds are familiar with sounds that humans are not aware of. These sounds may be loud but are pitched too high for our range. Canaries are unable to hear most of our sounds because they are too low for them. Canaries cannot hear a sound below high C. Dogs hear an octave higher than humans, but cannot hear the lower notes of a piano. Rats can talk to each other but we can't hear them because

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their voices are pitched two octaves too high. Bats are blind, but they can find their way around by the use of radar. They use supersounds for eyes. While a bat is flying, it gives out short squeaks pitched at 30,000 to 70,000 vibrations per second. These vibrations strike against even the tiniest obstructions in the air and bounce back to the bat's ears so that he doesn't run into anything.

Sound can destroy bacteria. The sound of cannon fire can shake buildings and break windows. If it were amplified, it could shake the building to pieces. In the case of germs, a much higher pitch would be necessary. So scientists produce sounds of 50,000,000 vibrations per second. This is 30,000 times as fast as the human ear can hear, and these vibrations just shake the bacteria to pieces.

It takes half an hour to pasteurize milk by the heat method, but only a few seconds with high frequency sound. Sound waves make serums more readily absorbed into the bloodstream.

Sound waves can be used to clear the air of smoke. The waves cause the smoke particles to come together and fall to earth like flakes. Fog was removed from an airport by twelve air-raid sirens amplified by twenty-four foot horns. The moisture particles condensed and fell as rain. But the vibrations were so powerful that birds were killed and the airport personnel were made nauseated even though they wore protection over their ears.

Sound may become an important factor in the treatment of disease if the sound waves can be focused on the malignant cells without destroying surrounding tissue. It might be a way to get rid of brain tumors without surgery.

Perhaps someday farmers will be able to rid their fields of insects by turning on supersounds. To drive a pest away the volume of the waves would have to be so intense that they would be unbearable. These would be so high pitched that we couldn't hear them. Unfortunately the same pitch that would cause pigeons to leave, would be very pleasant to a rat. It is going to be quite an interesting job to find out which frequency is most annoying to all the different pests.

MARINE DEITIES

by L. A. BURT

AS THE corn-god presided over the harvest of the land, so does the sea-god preside over the harvest of the waters. When the time came that men built large ships and went down to the bottom of the sea in them, the powers and the duties of the sea-gods became greatly magnified.

The coastal Peruvians, before the Spanish conquest, thought of the sea in much the same manner as many primitive people regarded the land—that is, as a nourishing mother. They called it Mama-cocha, or Mother Sea, because it gave them fish which supplied them the greatest part of their subsistence. The whale was greatly admired and was a general object of worship all along that coast. All over North and South America it was believed that animals, birds, and fish had counterparts who acted as kings, chiefs, and even gods to others of their species. In time, these fish-gods became anthropomorphic. Poseidon and Neptune were represented as being half man and half fish, with beards and holding a trident. The sea god of Babylonia is represented as a man with a fish's tail, below which there are human feet. He was a cultured god and taught the people along the Babylonian shore the arts of life. One marine deity which is represented in a bas-relief on the walls of Nimrud, has his head and shoulders covered with the skin of a fish, a relic of his piscine origin, just as many deities and anthropomorphic gods have the skins of their animal prototypes about the upper parts of their statues.

* * *

FIRE STONES

by JON BARRY

LOUISA JACOBS died a short time ago, still remembering the fire-spitting stone she had found eighty years before, but had given away because her mother had been too busy to bother to look at it. Louisa was only twelve years old when she found the sparkling stone along a river bank in Hope Town. She hurried home to show it to her mother who said she was too busy to bother to look at pebbles. If her mother had only taken a minute to look, the family might well have become millionaires. Louisa showed the stone to a neighbor who thought that it might be quartz, and offered to buy it. But Louisa's parents refused to allow her to accept money for just a shiny stone. So that was the last she ever saw of her fire-spitting stone.

A couple months later, the neighbor had the stone appraised at Capetown and learned that it was a valuable stone, so he sold the diamond to the Cape government for 500 pounds (then worth 2,500 dollars). This neighbor was one cheap character for he turned not a cent over to Louisa Jacobs who truly found the stone. When Louisa grew up, she married a diamond prospector, and the only diamond she ever wore was a very small but precious one in her engagement ring.

The stone that she had found by the river, was exhibited in Paris in 1867, and caused a rush of geologists and prospectors to come to South Africa. This rush led to the discovery of the "mother lode," the famous Kimberly diamond mines.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Chaney stared at the girl, his mind unwilling to accept the fact that a dream had become a reality. But the *dream* just sat and smiled at him. . . .

To dream at night is one thing—but to wake up in the morning and find your dream beside you is quite another

I Wake Up Dreaming

by Frances Yerxa

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ROBERT CHANEY was bewildered. One could detect a certain weakness in his handsome face. Sitting beside the fireplace, he felt as though Laura and Philip had all the odds in their favor. They towered over him, each preferring to stand, each delivering a rather long and frightening speech about how unreasonable he was being.

Laura, Robert Chaney's lovely, business-like wife, believed in utter frankness at a time like this.

"The Chaney Stables are washed up," she said. "Without horses you still insist on dreaming of a come-back. I've told you a hundred times that I don't love you. Philip . . ." she paused, looking at Philip Hannah with wide adoring eyes. "Philip wants to marry me and I want to marry him. Bob, be a good sport and give me a divorce."

Robert Chaney shook his head. He had been doing it with increasing stubbornness for the past fifteen minutes. Not that he expected Laura to change. So far as she was concerned, he knew that married life was doomed to be an infernal triangle from now on. It was the principle of the thing.

"I'm sorry," he said in a low voice. "We haven't done so well I'll admit. I can't see where it has been my fault. I've lost my money, but as far as I can determine, so have a lot of other men. I promised to love and honor until death do us part. Marriage can't be tossed aside every year Laura, like an old dress. You should understand."

"But, man," Philip Hannah interrupted. "Laura and I love each other. Be broad-minded, will you?"

Robert Chaney's fingers tightened on the arms of the chair. He started to rise, then sank back, feeling thoroughly miserable. In his opinion, he had been *very* broad-minded. Phil Hannah was the slick type. Slick from his well polished shoes to the last greasy hair on his head. How Laura could fall for Hannah . . .? But she had. In fact she spent more time with Hannah than she did with her husband. It had been her idea to force Chaney into applying for a divorce. It hadn't worked.

"I've been broad-minded, as you call it," Chaney said. "I'll admit there isn't much love lost between us. Laura is doing about as she pleases now. As for a complete separation, I'm sorry. I'm not *that* broad-minded."

Laura, her thin, well-molded face turned white with anger, leaned over him.

"Then take it from me, my very moral husband. you'll be sorry about this. I'll dog your footsteps night and day. Sooner or later you'll slip. When you do, I'll take you for every cent you have *and* a divorce."

Anger was beginning to seep into Robery Chaney's brain. He hated to make a scene. He stood up.

"I had a nice string of horses and a small fortune when you came along," he said evenly. "I've lost both. I still have some decent friends and I'm not going to lose them by starting an ugly scandal. It simply isn't right."

Phil Hannah was silent now. He didn't feel so cock-sure of himself with Chaney on his feet. He was secretly a little frightened of Chaney, in spite of his mildness. It was Laura who still felt defiance tugging inside her.

"You're an old-fashioned fuddy-duddy," she said coldly. "You won't get a divorce because you can't stand the thought of going to court. It will hurt you more when I come in some day with evidence that shows you've shown a streak of human emotion toward some other woman. Sooner or later you will, and *when* you do, I'll sue for divorce and every cent you

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

make as long as you live."

She turned abruptly, her cheeks drained of color, and took Philip Hannah's arm.

"Let's get out of this New England church atmosphere," she said.

WITH his wife and her companion safely out of the house, Robert Chaney wandered thoughtfully to the tobacco stand and loaded his pipe. He stood in the center of the vast room staring at the well-arranged expensive furniture. Thirteen rooms of it, he thought. Thirteen large rooms in an exclusive home filled with my life fortune. That is what's left.

It wasn't Chaney's fault, although he blamed himself in some mysterious manner. Laura had been sweet enough during the first three years. The Chaney Stables were a paying proposition. He had entered *My Lady* in half a dozen races and taken first and second money. The house had come out of that. The house and Laura's clothing.

Then *My Lady* broke her leg and had to be shot. After that, a jinx hovered over the Chaney Stables. Three horses died in a year. Bankruptcy threatened Chaney for weeks and lifted only when he sold everything but the house and a couple of small buildings at Arlington.

Then Philip Hannah came along, and Laura decided that the deal she had made with Chaney had folded up. No money, no love. It was that simple.

Chaney pushed the unlighted pipe between his teeth and went to his room. It was close to midnight. Laura wouldn't be in until four or five.

What difference did it make? She insisted on a separate room anyhow. His room was too cluttered with pipes and magazines. Laura demanded pink curtains and plenty of perfume. They didn't mix.

Chaney undressed slowly, trying to think out some plan that would bring her back to him. At last he gave it up as a bad job.

Lying on his back, he stared at the ceiling and tried to adjust himself to the idea of facing the years ahead. He had no fear of Laura being able to find grounds for divorce. He, Chaney, felt no interest at all in other women. Laura had cured him of that for all time. It was the moral side of it. Hollywood peddled divorces as though they were evening papers. The Puritan spirit in Chaney forbade any compromise with marriage.

Gradually he grew drowsy and Laura slipped from his mind. He remembered the better days out at Chaney Stables; the smell of clean straw and bright sunrise at the track. He thought of *My Lady* and what a grand horse she had been. After a while he gave up the fight and slept.

In his subconscious mind, Robert Chaney knew that he was sleeping. He knew what was happening was only a dream. He didn't try to escape it, because the dream was pleasant.

He was leaning over the rail at Arlington. Crowds roared in the stands behind him. It was the final stretch. A beautiful, straight-limbed horse thundered down the stretch, well ahead of the field.

He was cheering wildly. Why? *The white horse was his.* It was a very foolish dream. He didn't even know the horse's name. Yet, it belonged to him, Robert Chaney, and it was winning by a good three lengths.

He climbed halfway over the rail before he realized what he was doing, and the scene changed so abruptly that he cried out with disappointment.

He was sitting in a rickety chair, feet on the rungs, leaning back against a stall in the stable. He smoked quietly

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and stared with surprise at the vision of the loveliness who faced him.

She stood with legs well apart, pointing an accusing finger at him. She was just tall enough, he thought, to reach his shoulder, had he been standing up. A blob of soft chestnut hair framed her fresh, impishly pretty face.

They had known each other for a long time. He was sure of that, for she seemed to know all about him. Still, he couldn't remember where they had met.

"Laura will come around again," she said, and her voice tinkled pleasantly. "Just you wait and see. As soon as she finds out how smart you've been in buying a winner, she'll see her mistake."

"But I haven't," he protested. "It isn't my horse, really, but we'll overlook that. I never saw either you *or* the horse before the race."

"Oh," she said, "but you have. I've been your ideal for years and you just haven't realized it. I'm your dream lover."

He felt a warm uncomfortable feeling creep through him. This wasn't right. He didn't know why, but it just wasn't. He had never even dreamed of her before.

"But—Laura," he said weakly.

The girl came very close to him, leaning over to where she could whisper in his ear.

"Laura doesn't give you many breaks," she said, "but she can never penetrate your dreams. We're quite safe from her here."

Chaney swore.

"I'm safe anywhere," he said. "It's none of Laura's darned business what I do. I don't have to hide myself in dreams."

HE HADN'T realized that his voice was so loud. Perhaps it was her lips brushing his ear ever so slightly that made him shout. Anyhow, the sound yanked him upright in bed. His eyes were wide open.

He blushed.

Now that he was awake, he felt very guilty. What sort of love thief was he, to dream such things? It—well, it was almost as bad as what Laura was doing.

"Well, if you don't care, then why should *I* hide in your dreams," a startlingly familiar voice said.

Chaney jumped three feet, caught himself just as he was about to fall out of bed, and drew the covers up tightly around his neck. He turned slowly in the direction of the voice.

The girl he had talked with in the dream was sitting on the far side of the bed.

She didn't look like a dream now. The tightly fitting blue robe and impish face were very real.

"You!" he stuttered with becoming modesty. "You can't . . . That is, you mustn't stay here. What would . . .?"

She smiled, reached over and pinched his arm.

"What would Laura say? You told me a minute ago that you didn't think it was any of her darned business."

A high whinny came from the far side of the room. This time, Chaney did clear the edge of the bed. He stood there, draped Indian style in a blanket. He was staring at the horse he'd seen in his dreams. From the way it's hoofs had marked the shiny hardwood floor, he knew the animal was very real also.

He heard the girl laugh and his face turned a darker shade of red.

"What—what *is* this madness," he asked, and his voice was full of pity for Robert Chaney. *"It isn't possible."*

The vision on the bed arose and with a sudden abandoned bounce, sprang across the bed and snuggled close to him. He felt her warm breath on his

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

neck and the softness of her hair in his face.

"It's all *quite* real," she said softly. "You're an old fuddy-duddy, Bob. You have the idea that to live with a woman who hates you is quite noble. It happens that I have been trying to get into your dreams for a long time. Believe it or not, I'm quite fond of you, in spite of the foolish ideas you have."

"But I haven't," he protested. "It's all wrong. *This* is all wrong. A horse in my bedroom."

She moved away from him abruptly.

"The best solution of that," she said calmly, "is to get rid of the horse."

She was right. A horse had no business in a man's bedroom even if he was a dream horse.

"Where—how? What will I say about the creature. People will ask questions."

"It's your horse, isn't it?" she asked.

That made sense also.

"I—I guess so. I dreamed him."

She smiled teasingly.

"Well, what difference does it make *how* you got him, as long as he's yours. You'd better take him out to the stable before someone sees him here."

He thought of Laura, who was due home any minute now. The thought made him hurry into his shoes. About to complete the job of dressing, he remembered that the girl of his dreams was still present. She had stretched out full length on the bed and was watching him with fascinated eyes.

"You'll have to get out," he said.

"Why?"

"I—I—well, it's not right, that's all. You'll have to get out, I can't dress with you here."

She sighed.

"Fuddy-duddy," she said, and crawled out of bed. "I'll stay in the closet for just two minutes. You'd better hurry."

He did.

THE horse *was* a beauty, he admitted to himself, as he led her out of the back door toward the deserted stable. She looked a lot like *My Lady*. She was a perfect racer, the color of old ivory, and the way she acted as he led her through the darkness to her stall told him that she was a real queen of the track.

Chaney hadn't taken time to think everything out carefully. However, the headlight of a car cut the night as he went back toward the house. They almost caught him but he ducked behind the hedge and ran inside just as Laura drove into the garage. He was panicky. His friend of the dream was sitting before the mirror, applying makeup. It was Laura's makeup. She turned as he came in. He had to admit that Laura never had looked like this.

"My wife," he stammered. "She's come home." Then he realized what had happened. *"Where did you get that makeup kit?"*

He heard Laura enter her room, which was next door to his own.

"From your wife's vanity," his visitor said. She seemed very innocent and not the least bit frightened.

He couldn't tell her to put it back. It was too late. He heard Laura come to the door. She didn't attempt to come in.

"Mr. Chaney," she called, and there was no sweetness in her voice. He looked wildly at the girl. He wanted to keep quiet, to pretend he was asleep. If he did, she might open the door.

"Yes," he said weakly. "What do you want?"

"My makeup kit," she said. *"Don't* tell me you're using perfume and powder after all these years."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He could have choked her for that.

"As a matter of fact," he admitted lamely, "I did bring it in here. Thought you might have some bath powder. I ran out."

Laura laughed. It was a tight frightening little laugh.

"You must try my shaving cream also," she said sarcastically. "Keep the kit, I have another. Good night darling."

"Good night," he mumbled, and sighed with relief. He moved silently across the room and turned the key in the lock. He returned to the bed. He sat down and cradled his head in both hands.

He felt the weight of his dream girl on the bed beside him. Her arm went around his shoulders.

"What's the matter?" she asked softly. "Don't you like me?"

He looked up. Sitting very close to her like this, he had to admit that she was both exciting and dangerous.

"I—like you all right," he said. "It isn't right, that's all."

She pinched his cheek.

"It will do you good," she said. "You're so darned straight-laced that you've forgotten how to be happy."

"And what am I supposed to do about it?"

She stared at him, wide eyed with surprise.

"Good Heavens, don't you know?"

He shook his head.

"Don't get me wrong," he said. "I can't control my dreams. If you had to come here, and with a horse thrown in for good measure, why couldn't you come like a lady?"

She tossed her head, her eyes flashed.

"In a carriage, drawn by five white horses?" she asked.

He shook his head.

"That would have been better at least, to have arrived during the day, and decently clothed."

She leaned back on the bed.

"Suppose I thought you wanted me this way. Suppose I think I'm very attractive. After all, *I* did bring a horse. You can thank me for that."

"Thanks," he repeated without enthusiasm.

"Is that all?"

"Yes," he said. "All but the solution of how I'm to get rid of you.

She laughed, and it wasn't a very quiet laugh. He lived in constant fear now that Laura would hear them.

"You can get rid of me easily," she said. "Just go to sleep and dream me away."

It sounded like a very fine idea. Still, he wasn't sure. Suppose he dreamed of a couple more just like her?

"Where are you going to go in case I *can't* dream you away?" he asked. His voice was so pitiful that it made her look a trifle sad.

"I guess I'll just have to stay here. After all, I'm your dream. I can't belong to anyone else."

"What's your name?" he asked. He had to call her something.

"Susan," she said, "Susan Wayward. I guess I am a little, Wayward, I mean."

"And where do you propose to sleep tonight?"

"Right here," she said, and cuddled her pretty head on the pillow.

"Then I," Chaney said with new stubborness, "will have to sleep in the bathroom or the closet."

She didn't seem to hear. Her eyes were closed, and she stretched deliciously.

"I said, I'd have to sleep in the bathroom," he repeated.

She opened one eye and winked at him deliberately.

"Too bad," she said. "That's just too bad."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IT WAS ten o'clock in the morning before Robert Chaney dared leave his room.

Laura, as usual, ate breakfast alone. She drove out at ten minutes to ten, and Chaney dressed. He hadn't had a good night. The bath tub was hard, even when padded with half a dozen blankets. The shower insisted on dripping on his feet all night. He hadn't dared sleep again, because he feared he might dream. He shuddered at what might happen the next time he abandoned himself to the pleasure of a dream.

Susan Wayward was up before him. He searched the house for her, and following the fresh odor of toast, found her in the kitchen in one of Laura's finest tailored suits. She had set the table for two and was making oatmeal for them. She turned as he came in and hurried to his side. She kissed him on the chin. It was as high as she could reach without his co-operation.

"Don't do that," he begged.

She laughed.

"Don't tell me you don't like it?"

Life now was a continual blush for Robert Chaney. He sat down hurriedly. The toast was very good and he had to admit that Susan looked much better across the table than Laura ever had.

"Now that we face the full light of day," she asked, "am I lovely?"

The brazen way she threw herself at him troubled Chaney. She seemed to take it for granted that he couldn't resist her. By golly, he could, and every moral fiber within him insisted that he should.

"You—look very nice," he said. "Now, we'll have to get you out of here and into another place to live."

"*Mr. Chaney*," she cried, and he wondered what he'd done to make her angry. "It wouldn't be nice. You can't support another woman."

He blushed.

"I—I wouldn't be! Not exactly. It would be different if I intended to see you again."

She looked crestfallen.

"Don't you?"

"Now look here," he adopted his best father to daughter voice. "Of course I don't. You may be the product of a dream, but that wouldn't mean a thing to the public. I don't know just how a man is supposed to act toward a dream girl, but I'm married and I have a certain reputation to maintain."

"Is that good?" she asked.

He had a feeling that she was making fun of him.

"It is," he said stiffly. "And if I didn't send you away, just what is your suggestion?"

"First we'll go to the track," she said briskly. "We'll have to try Sheba."

"Sheba?"

"Yes, silly, my horse. We'll have to try Sheba and see what kind of time she can make. We'll start winning races next week, as soon as the season opens."

Sheba—the clean limbed racer that he had taken to the stable, was Susan Wayward's horse.

"Look here," he said. "That horse is a beauty. Where did you get him?"

"I didn't," she admitted. "You dreamed him up, and I took possession of him when we came here."

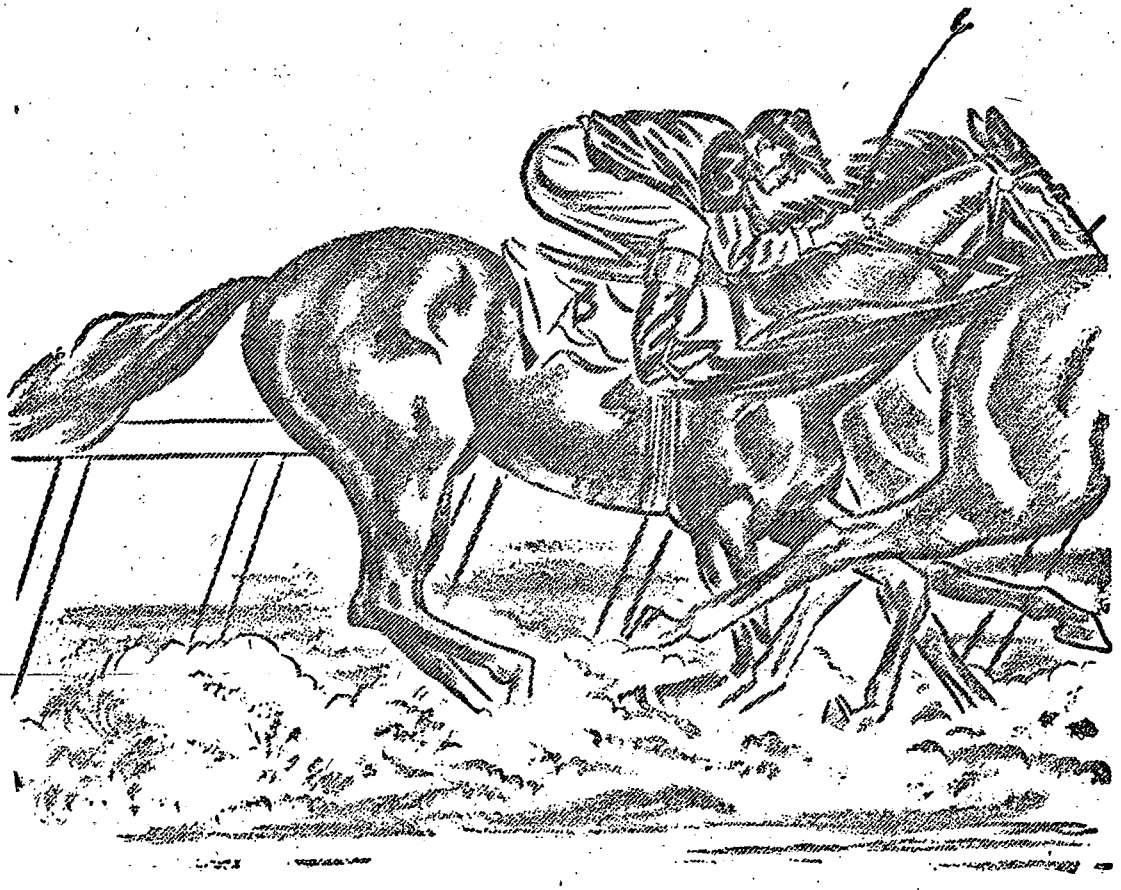
He was secretly proud of himself for dreaming up such a fine horse. She seemed to read his mind.

"May I remind you that you dreamed me also," she asked. "And I think your taste is pretty good."

He had no argument for that. They loaded Sheba on the trailer and drove her to Arlington. By five in the afternoon, Sheba had proven to be of cham-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Was it all merely a dream? Could it be that he wasn't really holding the girl in his arms? Chaney wondered . . .



pion stock. Everything was moving forward nicely, except a solution that would satisfy Robert Chaney's moral attitude toward Susan Wayward.

SUSAN, much against her will, was confined to the large, if not airy closet in Chaney's room. It was dinner time and that one period of the day when Mr. and Mrs. Chaney met as man and wife across the dinner table.

This evening, however, hostilities had not ceased, as they usually did during the dinner hour. Laura definitely had something on her mind. Something that made her look wise and nasty.

Robert read his evening paper, to prevent if possible, any outbreak on his wife's part. For the first time in his life, he had a guilty conscience. The conscience was named Susan Wayward.

Laura contained herself as long as she thought necessary, then exploded her first bomb-shell.

"I noticed you had company for breakfast!" she said.

Chaney tried to effect surprise. He had forgotten that both his and Susan's dishes were left when they finished with them.

"I—I don't understand," he said, but

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he did.

Laura adopted a "holier than thou" expression.

"So ducky doesn't understand, doesn't he?" She stood up, arms akimbo and glared at him. "Two cups of coffee *dear*, and with lipstick on one of them."

There was no argument. Chaney bowed his head and waited.

"And my makeup kit missing last night." She was only starting. "*And* Philip Hannah saw you at the racetrack today. You were with a very pretty wench."

He was about to protest over her calling Susan a wench, when he decided that Laura was probably exactly right.

"I'm—I'm sure that I can explain," he said, pleading for time.

She wasn't in a listening mood.

"Don't try," she said. "From now on I'll stick to your trail like a hound. I'm sure you'll slip again. I'll get evidence on you that will leave you without a reputation to stand on."

"You've been *walking* on it for years," Chaney said bitterly. "It's worn so thin from the mud you've tracked into it, its very little good to me anymore."

* * *

Came the running of the Hi-Lo Sweepstakes. The first place was interesting to Chaney because with the eye of an old horseman, he recognized winning material in Sheba, the dream horse.

A scant week had passed since his last scene with Laura. During that time, he had hidden Susan as though she were a bottle of fine bootleg Scotch. The fact that she might cause a break-up in the Chaney home didn't seem to trouble Susan in the least. Sometime, Chaney thought she was trying to do exactly that.

He finally convinced her that the guest room would be an excellent place for her to spend her nights. This gave him a chance to escape the bathtub and balance his moral scale slightly. It also prevented Laura from discovering the girl, as Laura was much too lazy to penetrate to the second floor, where the guest room was located.

Still, Susan had a way of wandering around the house in an indecent gown which positively frightened Chaney. He dreaded the night that she and Laura came face to face. The battle would be fast and furious. He would be of little use to either of them when it was all over.

Chaney hadn't, as yet, been able to adjust himself to Susan Wayward. He was forced to admit that, as a dream, she left little to be desired. In fact, he dreamed of her each night and not once during those dreams did he feel any urge to get rid of her. It became a habit of his to check up the first thing every morning, to make sure she was still somewhere around.

She never embarrassed him by mentioning the rather risque dreams he involved her in, and he, fuddy-duddy that he was, thought of the dream Susan and the flesh and blood Susan as two entirely different people. It didn't occur to him that she was following a carefully planned road that led into his heart.

Thus, the week passed and Laura felt that she and Philip Hannah were much closer to their goal. She didn't want to be too hasty about the divorce. She had seen the new horse and realized that her husband was about to tap a brand new source of income. It looked as though he was ready to make some real money.

Laura had no intention of passing up an opportunity to collect all she could and thereby add to Philip's rather limited income.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IN THIS manner the infernal triangle grew. Susan Wayward stalked silently through the center of the drama, avoiding Laura by inches, and having the time of her sweet life. There was no doubt in Susan's heart. She had found out what she wanted. Now she had to crack his outer shell to reveal the real Chaney beneath the crust of New England Puritanism.

* * *

The first and biggest race of the season was one day away. It might have easily turned out to be the story of the man who made a fortune from a single race. Unfortunately, his wife wasn't Chaney's sole worry. He thought constantly about Sheba. On the fatal night he at last fell asleep and dreamed that the race was already in progress. Once more he was at the rail. Sheba was out in front as she had been in the dream he met Susan.

Cheering hoarsely, he saw the fat purse coming closer to his grasp and felt immensely proud to own such a grand creature. Then, he realized suddenly that something was wrong. A cry of horror came from the stands. He looked back again to the spot Sheba had held throughout the race. She was gone. Panic stricken, he allowed his eyes to travel back—back on the empty track.

Sheba was down.

She had thrown her jockey and lay writhing on the track. He knew at once because he recognized such things with the eye of an expert, that Sheba had broken a leg.

Robert Chaney awakened with perspiration pouring from his face. He sat up in bed, remembering vividly how cruel the dream had been. Sheba dead? Good Lord, why did he have to dream that?

Susan burst in upon him. Her eyes were wide with terror. She had taken time only to wrap herself in a light robe.

"Bob—Oh, Bob, why did you have to . . .?"

He clapped his hand over her mouth, muffling the sound of her voice. If Laura heard . . .?

"Have to—what?"

She was quieter now.

"Sheba—Oh, Sheba," she sobbed it out, her heart was broken. "Bob, you darned fool. Don't you know that Sheba and I are only dreams. You dreamed that Sheba broke her leg. If you dreamed it, you forced it to happen."

Far away, in the library, the phone rang.

"See," she said. "They are calling."

In his heart, he knew that she was right. His own damned selfish mind had made him worry. Because he worried, he had destroyed the very thing that would have made him a fortune. Slowly, without daring to speak, he went toward the phone. When he came back, Susan was sitting quietly on the bed. She didn't speak. Her eyes were filled with tears. He looked down at her and nodded.

"Sheba kicked her way out of the stall," he said. "She's dead. They had to shoot her."

A sob shook Susan Wayward's shoulders.

"YOU can dream me right back into non-existence any time you wish," Susan Wayward sobbed. "I can see now that it was all a mistake. You'll never be anything but a moss-backed old Puritan. You didn't want me in the first place. It was Sheba that you wanted, not me."

This was a bitter speech, but Chaney knew he deserved it. The night had

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

passed and badly, for him. Now that Sheba was dead, what little interest he had in the future was gone. He had lost his last chance to make a comeback. He couldn't even look at Susan without thinking how terrible it would be if Laura caught her. He was left in a position where he could support no one, not even himself.

They were eating a late breakfast. Laura had gone to the track, because Philip Hannah had bet a small fortune on a horse, and she hoped it would come in, in the money.

Susan finished her tearful scolding and Chaney felt very low.

"It isn't because you aren't pretty," he tried to explain. "It's because I'm just not—not the type who can go through with such things. I've always considered marriage sacred. We can't lose our heads at a time like this. We are facing a crisis. How do I know that I love you, or for that matter, how do I know if you won't try the same thing Laura did after you grow tired of me?"

Susan gazed at him scornfully.

"You won't have a chance," she said. "You brought me here, and it's up to you to send me back. I demand it."

Chaney wasn't sure that it was the best thing to do, because his head felt like an empty butter tub, and his temper had been worn to tissue thinness through just such arguments with Laura. He was willing to try anything.

"OKAY," he agreed. "I'm going to dream you so far away that you'll never have to worry me again."

"Now?" Susan asked hopefully.

Chaney sprang to his feet.

"Of course not," he said. "Why, who ever thought of dreaming at ten in the morning? You'll have to wait until tonight."

He turned and stormed out of the house. He didn't take the trouble to look back. If he had, he might have seen tears streaming down Susan's pretty face.

Chaney sat up, drew the bed clothes around him and stared morosely at the vision sitting at the bottom of the bed.

"It's no use," he groaned. "I can't go to sleep, much less dream."

Susan smiled. She had chosen to wear a shimmery, unsubstantial affair of black silk and it did things for her that would keep almost any man awake. She stretched carefully and placed a pretty hand to her lips. She yawned.

"It's up to you," she said. "I can't do anything about it."

Chaney didn't answer. He stretched out at full length and tried again to go to sleep. For the second time he sat up.

"I've been trying since ten o'clock," he said sourly. "It's three-thirty now. I can't seem to get into the dreaming mood. I keep staring at you."

"That's odd," Susan answered innocently. "Now, what do you think causes such a feeling."

He shook his head.

"Susan, for Heaven's sake, can't you sing me to sleep or something. I can't do a thing about it. You *want* to go away, you know."

Surprise flitted across her face.

"Do I?"

"You said you did," he insisted. "The sooner the better, you said."

"I meant that I wanted to get away from you if you were going to continue being such a fuddy-duddy."

"I can't change my personality," Chaney said stiffly.

"But it isn't your *real* personality," she cried. "You're a nice boy underneath. It's just that hard, Puritanical shell you've climbed into."

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TO PROVE that she was right, she jumped up quickly and landed squarely in Chaney's lap. Struggling weakly to free himself, he felt her lips firmly against his.

Then events piled up with terrific speed.

The door flew open and someone howled in a loud voice:

"Hold it!"

A light flashed in Chaney's face that completely succeeded in blinding him for an instant.

When he could see again clearly, Susan was still on his lap with her arms thrown around his neck. Laura, Philip Hannah and a strange looking little bum with a camera were all grouped around the bed.

Laura was saying something in a very unpleasant voice.

"You all see him. You are my witnesses. He's been with this *woman* for several days. I knew we'd catch them sooner or later."

Phil Hannah had that same polished look on his mug, and the photographer wore a grin and stared at Susan with something that was more than professional interest.

"We got the picture, all right," he said. "Boy, what a baby. Can't say as I blame you, Mister."

"Well, I do," Laura said in a tight, half jealous voice, "and now I can have that divorce *and* enough alimony to make me happy."

Susan drew the covers around her and pressed herself as tightly as possible against Chaney's chest. She hardly knew what his reaction would be.

Chaney looked bewildered and very doubtful for a minute. Then an odd, triumphant smile lighted his face. Susan thought that he looked strong and brave and it seemed that he felt very self-satisfied.

"Well, Laura," he said sternly. "So you've finally got the evidence you need. Well, maybe that picture wasn't clear enough. *Maybe you better tell that peeping Tom to take another shot, just to make sure.*"

He placed both arms around Susan and gave her a long, and decidedly deliberate kiss.

"That's better," he said, as they separated. He felt slightly dizzy and light headed, as though he was floating in the air again after being grounded for a long time.

"Now, get out of here, the whole pack of you. I've got unfinished business to take care of."

Before his anger, the three melted like ice on a hot skillet. When the door closed, he looked once more at Susan.

"There," he said. *"Now,* am I a Puritan?"

Susan was breathless.

"A Puritan would never kiss like that," she said.

"And I'm broke. Do you remember? I'll have to give Laura everything I own, including the house, before she's satisfied."

Susan tickled him affectionately under the chin.

"After it's all over with, and she's satisfied," she said. "You can dream up all the horses you want to fill the best racing stable in the state. If you did it once, you can certainly do it again."

A bewildered smile wreathed Robert Chaney's face.

"I—I never thought of that," he admitted.

Susan Wayward smiled.

"There are a lot of things you never thought of," she chided. "Not until tonight."

He kissed her again.

THE END

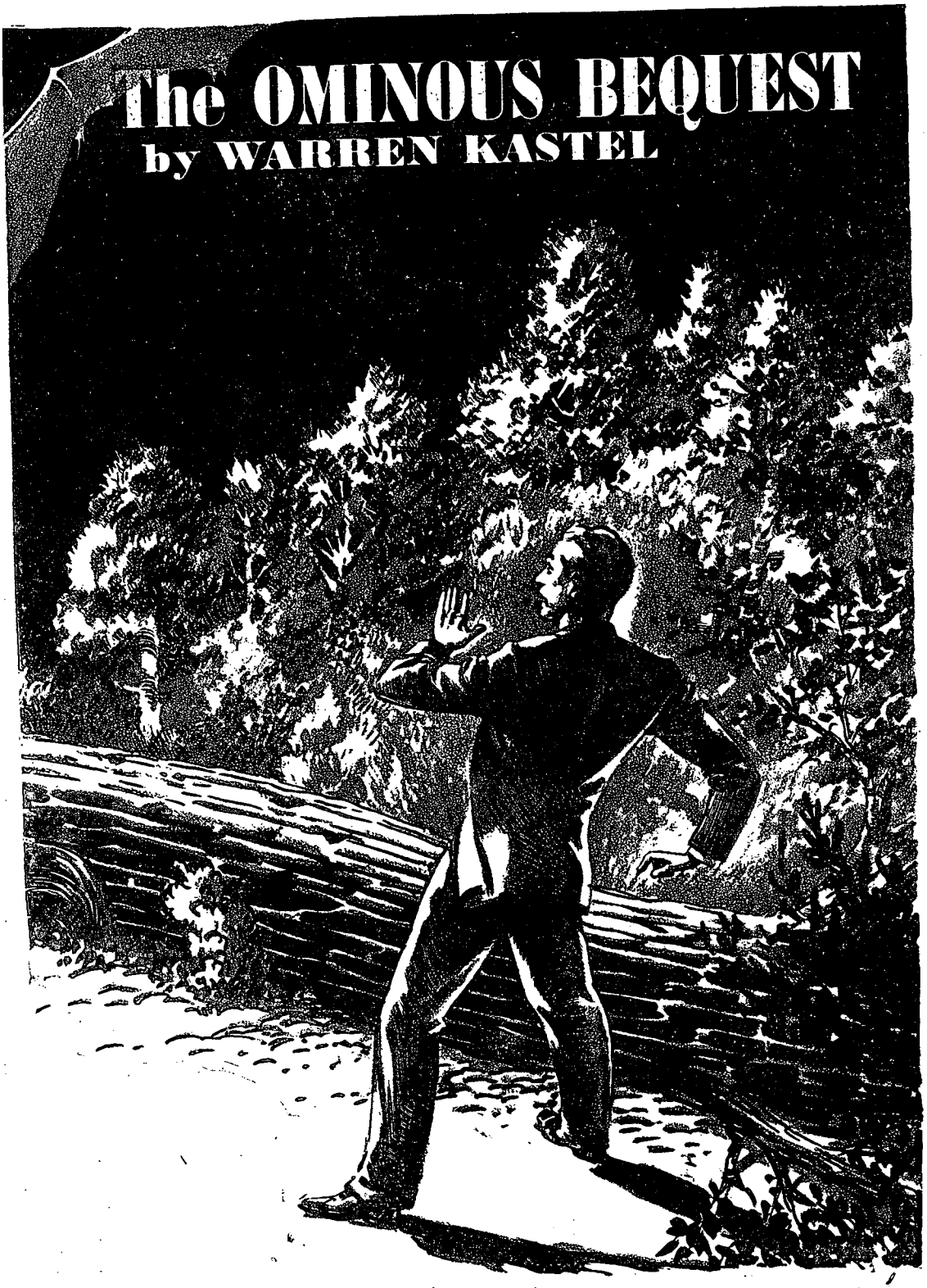
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cyril Gansdt just happened to be around that night when the earthquake released the strange being who called himself Mik'l. But Mik'l thought that Cyril had helped him, so he gave him—

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The OMINOUS BEQUEST

by WARREN KASTEL



From the depths of the hole came a weird creature, and Cyril backed up in alarm . . .

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THERE were fleecy white clouds in the sky, and they scudded along like little lambs.

A warm breeze was blowing, rustling the leaves of a large oak tree which stood tall and stately on the slope of a small hill. The Moon was shining brightly, and its rays, filtering through the leaves of the tree threw mottled patterns of silver on the grass.

The hill made a pretty picture in the moonlight, thought Cyril Gansdt, Ph.D., as he sat with his back to the tree, arms clasped loosely around his knees. It was a nice little hill—an innocent little hill—not at all the kind of hill one would suspect of hiding a great secret, especially on a beautiful night like this.

But that secret, hidden beneath tons of earth for untold centuries, was soon to be divulged. For in a few moments, the hill would cease to be.

Cyril loved the night, much more so than the day. And he loved to sit against that oak tree and look up over the hill at the Moon. It was such a beautiful Moon, smiling down upon the Earth, a prize among the treasures of the sky.

Cyril would have given half his life to travel to the Moon, and though he hated the hypocrisy of the thought, he sometimes told himself he would gladly sell his soul to the devil for such an experience.

The Man in the Moon always intrigued Cyril. He often wondered if there was such a being—then he chided himself for wondering about such an impossible thing. And yet, the Man in the Moon always smiled when Cyril looked up at him—as if he knew a great secret and took pleasure in the fact that he alone knew it.

The night was always so peaceful around that hill. That was why Cyril always came there. After a trying day at the University of Florence, in sunny Italy, the soft cool breezes that played around the little hill were a restorant to his worn nerves. Not that Cyril detested lecturing, especially to Astronomy classes, it just seemed that the day was long, because he looked forward so much to the night.

Somewhere overhead came the soft song of a nightbird. Cyril leaned back against the tree and sighed. He was content.

Deep within the hill—so little in comparison to the mountains that lifted sleepy peaks skyward at the horizon's end, titanic forces were stirring. They yawned, and the yawn was a dull rumbling roar. Cyril suddenly felt a tremor in the earth beneath him. Then the forces became a thundering voice whose vibrations shook the very ground.

The clouds still resembled little white lambs, and the Moon continued to shine. But the wind had died away as if expectant of some terrible thing to come. And then that something came.

The hill rose, hopped, and then erupted. Huge pieces of rock and earth slid down on all sides. The lone oak tree at its base swayed, and Cyril clambered to his feet in fright and dashed to safety. Behind him the tree suddenly crashed to the ground.

The hill was no longer a hill, it was a nearly level mound. And the forlorn remains of the tree lay buried in scattered heaps of dirt and rock. The desolate roots pointed to the heavens, and the wind was blowing again.

The Moon shone brightly into a large hole which the tree had covered. Cyril stared at that hole, and suddenly began to tremble.

FROM the shadowy depths came a strange being. The strangest being Cyril had ever seen. It remotely resembled some huge ungainly bat—and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

yet Cyril instinctively knew it was not a bat. It had wings that were leathery, as all bats have, and its mouth hid sharp little teeth. But though it looked ungainly, it was not. It skipped gracefully over the heaps of rock and dirt, and spreading its wings, flew over the remains of the oak tree, to land not twenty feet from where Cyril was standing—not knowing whether to run, cross himself, or faint.

Cyril was a very broadminded person, though he had never actually believed in the supernatural sciences. And yet, at that moment, his senses told him that this creature could not possibly be any product of the material world he knew so well. Just as he began to experience the first vague evidences of fear, it saw him.

"Oh! So it was you who freed me!"

Cyril knew the words had not been spoken in the way he and his kind spoke, but nevertheless he heard them. The voice came from nowhere in particular, and yet seemed to come from all directions. How the creature did it Cyril could not tell.

"Well, it was you—wasn't it?" The being tucked one leathery wing beneath its head and gazed at Cyril questioningly.

"I—I don't know—who are you!" Cyril stepped back and prepared to run.

"Me? Why my name's Mik-l, I'm an angel."

"An angel!" Courage flowed back into Cyril's veins. "You—you're crazy, an angel has wings, and—"

"Well, I have wings."

Cyril had to admit that it did, but he was not daunted.

"But angels are beautiful—and you, you're—"

"Who says they are?"

"Why, why everyone!"

"Have you ever seen one before?"

"No, but—"

"Has anyone you know ever seen one?"

"No—"

"Well then, how do you know they're beautiful?"

Cyril was stumped. He didn't know just what to say. It was so preposterous—that this creature had the audacity to claim that it was an angel! And, yet. . . .

"Come, let's not dabble over personalities. I'm indebted to you, you know, for freeing me from that dreadful tomb. You did a nice job of it, I must say."

"But I—"

"Tut, now, don't try to deny it. It was a marvelous job. Lucifer himself couldn't have done better." The angel spread his wings and inhaled the crisp night air. "Ah, but it's good to taste an atmosphere again—not that I need it of course, but good just the same."

"This is too ridiculous!" stormed Cyril, his indignation getting the better of his astonishment.

"What is?"

"You!"

The angel shrugged and sighed. "And to think I once laughed at Puck for calling you mortals fools!" He leaned against the torn tree roots and gazed at Cyril in disapproval. "But I must not forget that I owe you a debt of gratitude. Come now, I must do something for you in return. What'll it be?"

"Leave me alone and get out of here. You've spoiled enough of my night as it is." Cyril felt that he should be angry, and was almost succeeding in making himself believe he was.

"Is that any way to talk when I offer you something in return for your services?" The angel's voice took on an offended note. Cyril suddenly felt ashamed of himself and hung his head.

"Oh, that's all right," soothed the angel, noting Cyril's penitence, "per-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

haps I have been a bit hasty, but come now, what can I give you? Isn't there anything you want?"

CYRIL thought swiftly. The whole thing was obviously a joke, but he might as well humor the thing, whatever it was, along. What had he to lose? He thought hard for something to ask for, but for the first time in his life, couldn't find anything he especially wanted. He was about to give the whole thing up in disgust when he suddenly recalled an old saying which ran: "Give him the Earth and he'd wish for the Moon." Cyril looked up at the bat-like being and got an idea.

"Very well, if you mean what you say, then give me the Moon!" He puffed his chest up in triumph. That would call the creature's bluff.

"The Moon. Yes—hmm. You are an ambitious mortal aren't you!"

"Well," retorted Cyril, beginning to feel angry again as he saw his bluff working, "you said I could have anything I wanted!"

"Oh, you can have it if you want it, but you really don't know what you're getting into. Are you sure there's nothing else you might want instead?"

"No! It's the Moon or nothing!" Cyril folded his arms impatiently and glared across at the angel.

"Very well, since you want it, it's yours—but don't say I didn't warn you!" He spread his wings wide as if to wash any blame from his conscience. Cyril began to feel uneasy.

"Now that I've got it, how am I going to get there?"

"Oh, that's no trick at all. I'll take you. But here, you better put this on, it'll save you a lot of trouble out in space." He drew a small diamond shaped ring from some hidden source about him, and handed it to Cyril. "Slip it on, you'll need it."

Cyril took the proffered ring and examined it suspiciously. There was a curious jewel set in the center of a metal casement. It emanated a soft blue radiance, but outside of that, seemed perfectly harmless. He slipped it on and immediately felt a tingling sensation shoot up his arm and over him. He almost pulled it off, in apprehension, but then the tingling stopped.

Cyril had never felt so good in all his life. He didn't notice the wind, and he could hold his breath as long as he wanted to. He tried taking a deep breath to see how great his powers were, but nothing happened. True, his chest expanded all right, but that was all. Then it dawned on him that he really wasn't breathing. For a moment he became frightened, but the angel reassured him.

"It's quite alright. That's why I gave it to you. There's no air in space, or on the Moon, you know, and too, it's dreadfully cold up there. But you won't notice it as long as you keep the ring on. Of course you'll have to have a new one every half an eon, but that's too far away to worry about now. I always said Otto deserved a vacation for thinking that one up!"

"Who's Otto?" demanded Cyril, new respect for the angel in his voice.

"Oh, you'll meet him in due time. He'll probably welcome you with open arms, which is more than Lucifer will do. But that's your lookout, not mine. Well, are you ready to go?"

Cyril was ready all right—ready to make tracks home. But he knew that if he did that he would profess himself a coward, and Cyril was not a coward.

There were a lot of things he would have liked to ask the angel beforehand —the whole business was too mysterious. But the angel was impatient, so Cyril decided to take the gamble. After

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

all, he'd always wanted a chance to go to the Moon, hadn't he? Cyril wasn't so sure, now that the moment was at hand, that he did.

THE angel pulled his wings together, and Cyril climbed on his back. His heart was in his mouth as they rose into the air—higher, and higher. He was almost afraid to look down, and when he found the courage to do so, was astounded to find the Earth no larger than a good-sized medicine ball. The Moon on the other had grew immense.

Space was cold and dark, but Cyril didn't notice it. In fact he was quite warm. It was a weird void they journeyed through, soundless, oppressive. And the immensity of the Moon kept creeping closer. Cyril could make out the myriad towering peaks that stretched towards the heavens. He could see the desolate waste that was the Sea of Serenity. And then Cyril saw something that made him gasp.

A gigantic face peered at him from the side of a huge mountain. A face so immense its size staggered him. But it was not a human face, it was a face of stone. And as they drew close to the desolate surface, Cyril made out a figure clinging to the side of that mountain. It was the figure of a man.

He was straddled on the pinnacle surface of a stone ear, a massive steel chisel in one hand, and an enormous sledge in the other. He swung the hammer in powerful strokes against the chisel and flakes of stone flew in all directions, floating leisurely downward in the slight gravity.

He resembled some herculean wrestler, and the massive hammer, though its weight was minimized in the Moon's feeble attraction, was like a toy in his hand. His hair was the brightest red Cyril had ever seen, and his eyes were a sparkling blue. He stopped his labors as they approached and stared up at them in surprise. Then:

"Well speak of the devil! Ho there! Mik-l! And where have you been keeping yourself these past centuries? By the wrath of Lucifer but I'm glad to see you!"

The angel alighted softly on the scarred surface of the Moon, and Cyril slid from his back to sway uncertainly in the light gravity. The angel spread a leathery wing skyward to where the giant sat on the great stone ear, and waved a greeting.

"Hello there, Otto! Come down, I've got someone I want you to meet. He's come to relieve you of your duties, though he doesn't as yet know it!"

"What's that?" bellowed Otto from atop the mountain, though he really said nothing at all. To Cyril, the voices seemed to come from somewhere in his brain—as if he didn't need ears to hear them. "What did you say about someone relieving me? Wait—I'll be right down!"

Caching his sledge and chisel against a bulwark of stone, the giant suddenly leaped into space and floated slowly, like a bloated sack of feathers, to the ground. He landed almost directly in front of Cyril.

Well now, let me get a good look at you Mik-l. It's been many years since you've visited the Moon. Tell me, where've you been keeping yourself?"

Mik-l tucked a wing beneath his head and glanced aside at Cyril.

"To tell you the truth, Otto, I've spent the last few centuries beneath a couple tons of dirt and rock on Earth. I was chasing one of Lucifer's imps when I got caught in a landslide. And I'd be there yet if this mortal here hadn't freed me. I don't know how he did it and can't say that I care, but, owing him a debt of gratitude, I offered

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

him anything he wanted;" he sighed before continuing. "And the poor fool asked for the Moon."

"The Moon!" roared Otto in surprise. "He can bloody well have it if he wants it—but does he know—?" Mik-l shook his head. Otto looked at Cyril, and Cyril looked at Otto.

"Will somebody please tell me what this is all about?" pleaded Cyril in complete dismay. "I don't understand this at all."

MIK-L shifted his wings, kicked up a little sand, and gazed sorrowfully at Cyril.

"I suppose I might as well break the news to you now as ever. You see, the Moon isn't exactly a healthy place for mortals. At least not since Lucifer has been in exile here." He kicked up some more sand and continued. "You see, a few hundred centuries ago—before you and your kind were in existence, we angels had a little trouble amongst us. A minority were discontent and tried to change our living conditions, and these few, with Lucifer at their head were exiled into the exterior darkness of the Moon. And they've been here ever since.

"As immortals they couldn't be punished in any other way, and so, with his wings clipped, Lucifer, along with his rebel band was put up here to serve his punishment. Of course, we had to consult Father Time with the matter, and he set the sentence at a hundred eons.

"A keeper had to be appointed, and as none of us wanted the job, Otto here was created for the task. After a few centuries or so, he showed such good sense and intelligence that we decided it wouldn't be a bad idea to have a whole race like him inhabiting the Earth. So. . . . Anyway, Otto's job has been to see that Lucifer keeps to his own side of the Moon—and when he doesn't, to call for reinforcements.

"It's regretable that Lucifer won't take his punishment peacefully. He usually makes a break once a year, and at that time, Otto has his hands full. When these attempts are made, a few imps usually manage to slip by our guard in the confusion and escape to Earth. Then we have to spend some time rounding them up and bringing them back here.

"These breaks are usually made around the end of the Earth year—Halloween I believe you call it, when goblins and such are supposed to flit around the atmosphere. I'll admit that those imps can be rather annoying at times. So there you have the story. Now you see what you have to contend with."

Cyril stood there with open mouth. He was positively stunned, and though he would have liked to say something, he couldn't. Otto kicked up a flurry of sand and clapped Cyril on the back.

"I don't mind saying that I'm glad someone else is to finally take over this business. I've had enough trouble these past centuries, and I need a vacation. Of course, my time has been used up by other things too—for example my stone head." He turned towards the towering human image of rock, and gazed at it fondly.

"I've been working on that for many years. I had hoped to complete it soon, and would have done so long ago if it hadn't had those blasted meteors to contend with. Every time I think I've carved some detail to perfection, a slab of junk from space is sure to smack into it and spoil my work. Then I've got to do it all over again." He sighed and shook his head.

"Of course, now that you're here to take over my duties, I won't be able to finish it—but how I am going to enjoy

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that vacation!"

"Well," said Mik-l, ruffling his wings about him, "if you're ready Otto, lets get going. I've got some business of my own to attend to, but I'll drop you off at Earth first."

"Wait!" croaked Cyril, "you're not going to leave me alone here — are you?"

"Why not?" queried the angel in surprise, "you wanted the Moon, didn't you? Now that you've got it, there's no sense in us hanging around."

"But I don't want it—I've changed my mind!" Cyril suddenly became angry. "Besides, you played a dirty trick on me by not telling me about this place before you got me up here, and I won't have it—it's all your fault!"

"A fine thing!" roared Otto in disgust, "a fine thing! Just because you're afraid to face the music, I'm to get gypped out of a rest I earned a couple thousand years ago! It seems to me that I'm the one who should do the hollering around here! By Lucifer—you're not going to get away with it—you picked your bed, now lay in it!"

Mik-l tucked a wing unconcernedly under his head and surveyed the two of them.

"This is a pretty predicament, I must say. I confess that I don't know just what to do. Otto deserves his rest—and after all, you did ask for the Moon—I gave you a fair chance to back out."

"But you're forgetting a lot of important things," protested Cyril desperately, calling his every wit into play.

"Am I?" asked the angel in surprise, "what!"

"For one thing," argued Cyril, "you forget that I'm only a human—and humans don't live for centuries like you do. Too, if you left me alone up here, Lucifer would probably kill me and then he'd escape to Earth and you'd have to spend the next hundred years or so trying to catch him. And in the meantime he'd be spreading terror on us mortals—damn it! It's not fair!"

"Hmm," muttered Mik-l, shifting his wings thoughtfully, "I hadn't thought of that angle, now that you mention it. There's something in what you say. I suppose Otto and I would get the long end of the job anyway. Well? What do you say Otto—is it worth the risk?"

THE Moon Keeper sighed and shrugged his shoulders in resignation. "I knew there'd be a catch in it somewhere. I suppose he's right—we'd only have more trouble on our hands after while. I guess we'd better let him go back—and I'll have to stay until Lucifer's sentence is up." He sighed again, and then brightened. "At any rate I'll be able to finish my face!"

Cyril wanted to shout for joy, and might have if something had not happened just at that moment. The Lunar terrain began to tremble beneath his feet. And far off at the edge of the eternal twilight belt, Cyril made out shadowy wraiths gathering like storm clouds in a threatening sky. Otto let out a bellow.

"It's Lucifer! He's up to his old tricks again. I might have expected something like this just when I'm not prepared! Mik-l—you better get this mortal out of here before it's too late. Put him on a moonbeam and then get back—I'll need your help!"

Cyril wasn't aware that his teeth were chattering. He wasn't even aware of climbing on the angel's back and being suddenly whisked skyward. All he knew was that something terrible was about to take place on the Moon—something he didn't want any part of.

Away from the desolate surface they flew, towards a silver shaft of light that spanned across space towards Earth.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mik-l siddled up to the silver shaft and motioned Cyril to get off his back.

"But you can't leave me out here!" protested Cyril in fright, "I'll fall!"

"No you won't," Mik-l said impatiently, "you'll just slide down it—like you would a barber pole."

"But there's nothing there—it's just a shaft of light, how can I hang on to nothing!"

The angel shifted his wings in agitation. "How trying you mortals can be some times. Do as I say, you won't fall, it's solid enough all right. Why shouldn't it be? It's a beam—and beams are solid masses that support weight. Come now, I've got to get back to Otto—you're wasting time."

Much against his will, Cyril left the protection of the angel's back and clutched at the misty looking moonbeam. To his surprise and thankfulness, he didn't fall through as he had half suspected. It was actually solid.

"Well, good-bye, and good luck," waved Mik-l, moving away from Cyril and the beam of silver light, "maybe I'll see you again sometime!" With that he was gone, and though Cyril felt no sensation to assert it as fact, he knew he was falling.

Down—down—down he slid, his arms entwined around the moonbeam in a grip of death. But he couldn't stop himself from sliding, and when he dared to look towards Earth, he found himself rapidly approaching the very spot from which he had taken off on that mad journey. Cyril thought he would be crushed to a pulp when he reached the ground, but he wasn't. As lightly as a feather his feet touched the Earth, and he uttered a prayer of thanksgiving.

Stark and empty stood the ominous hole from which Cyril had first seen the angel appear. The twisted roots of the old oak lifted torn arms skyward. And Cyril was so happy to be back he almost sang. He inhaled deeply of the night air, but nothing happened. Then he remembered the ring he still had on his finger.

Cyril wanted to be as free as was humanly possible from the memory of what had happened that night, and it was with little hesitation that he tore the ring from his finger and threw it into the hole by the tree. Immediately he felt the cool night air upon his face, and his lungs took in great gulps of it.

It was wonderful to feel the wind again, and Cyril wouldn't have traded all the Moons in the Universe for that feeling. He glanced towards the heavens, but a mist overcast the Lunar surface. Cyril could guess what that mist might be. But he preferred not to.

With a tune echoing softly from his lips, Cyril headed Homeward, and his gait was long and free.

A meadowlark warbled in a distant field, and its song was a herald of dawn. Little white clouds scudded along overhead, and they resembled little lambs seeking a haven in the night. The wind hummed merrily and it rustled the grass into waves like a rippling sea.

At the door to his cottage, Cyril paused and glanced heavenward. The mist had passed from the sky, and though he couldn't be sure, as he stood there and watched, it seemed as if the Man in the Moon was smiling. . . .

WATCH FOR THE GREAT NEW "TOFFEE" STORY—

"THE SPIRIT OF TOFFEE"

By CHARLES F. MYERS

CONTINUING THE ADVENTURES OF MARC PILLSWORTH AND HIS DELECTABLE DREAM GIRL!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ELEMENTAL SPIRITS

by SANDY MILLER

ACCORDING to the Abbé de Villars, the air is full of creatures of human form, who in appearance are fierce, but are actually tractable, science lovers, subtle, eager to serve learned ones but hostile to fools. Their wives and daughters are huge and beautiful like the Amazons. The waters were inhabited as well as the earth, and these creatures were called Nymphs or Undines by the Adepts of the past. Most of the children born to them are beautiful daughters, so lovely that the daughters of men cannot compare with them. According to the Abbé the earth is populated to within a short distance of its center with Gnomes, who are smaller in stature, and guard the mines, and precious stones. They are friendly toward mankind and are ordered about easily. The Gnomides who are their wives are tiny but very pretty and quaint in their attire. The Salamanders are the inhabitants of the fiery regions, and serve the philosophers but do not seek their company. The wives of the Salamanders are even more beautiful than any of the other Elementals, because their element is more pure, especially mentally pure. These creatures are to be pitied for their souls are mortal and they have no hopes of enjoying the Eternal Being whom they religiously adore. The only way they can achieve immortality is to form an alliance with a man of earth, which is very difficult.

* * *

JEWELED COBRA

by PETE BOGG

PEOPLE used to believe that every snake, as well as toads, had in its head a precious jewel. To doubt this belief was sinful. According to an old Sanskrit legend, there once lived a very beautiful maiden who longed for one of these jewels to the extent that she killed a cobra and removed the valuable stone from his head. It was the duty of the snake tribe to avenge the murder. So the King of the serpents called on his magic powers, and took the form of a handsome young man, and in this disguise, he proceeded to court the unsuspecting maiden. She fell in love with him and soon they were married with great ceremony. When the bridal couple retired to the bridal suite, she looked lovingly at her husband. He smiled at her, but when his mouth opened, she noticed to her great horror that his tongue was forked and that it trembled. He did not have the tongue of a man, but that of a snake.

Early the next morning, the bride's father and several friends stood outside the door to offer greetings to the happy couple. There was no answer to their knock nor was there a reply again at noon or in the evening. There was not even a sound from their chamber. During the next night the father broke down the door, and then he saw the terrible vengeance of the snake. On the bed lay the lifeless body of his beautiful daughter. The bridegroom was not in sight, but a black cobra came writhing out from under the bed and slithered from the house through a hole in the wall.

FIRE BOMBS

by J. R. MARKS

EVERY year forest fires destroy millions of dollars worth of trees. These fires spread over such large areas and become so fierce and hot that fire fighters cannot get near enough to them to do much good. Today three government agencies are working together to prevent large destructive fires. They are fighting fires from the air. When the forest rangers in their mountain lookout stations see smoke from a fire they call in their report to a nearby airfield where peace-time bombs are loaded into B-29s and P-47s. These special peacetime bombs are filled with chemicals and water that put out the fires. In just a few minutes after the airfield receives the fire report, there is a roar of motors above the flames. A P-47 zooms down over the fire at 350 miles an hour and drops a 165 pound water-filled bomb. Then a B-29 follows up with a 4,000 pound water and chemical filled bomb. This causes a huge blast of water and mud and rocks to explode upward and extinguish the flames in the nearby area. Then another plane flies low and drops men and axes and other fire fighting equipment. In just a short time the flying firemen are able to extinguish the last of the blaze.

Using this new method, fire-fighters can reach the fire before it spreads too far. They can enter areas that could not be reached with trucks and other large equipment. This experiment has been tried out in Missoula, Montana with such success that the experimenters hope the plan will be used throughout the country.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Tides of Time

by A. Bertram Chandler

They say that time is relative—

but what if time is *one* of your relatives!

"AND so tomorrow you find out. . . ."

"Yes."

Aubrey St. John Sheraton looked across the table, across the remains of the simple yet expensive meal, at the girl. And she was worth looking at. Black hair, blue eyes, the kind of skin that is best described as golden—these were charms beside which the Sheraton Secret paled to insignificance. Perhaps the cheekbones were a shade too high,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Aubrey Sheraton felt a strange kinship in the room—and time seemed to have stopped . . .

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

perhaps there was far too much intelligence in the eyes to suit those who prefer their women merely ornamental—but Aubrey St. John Sheraton knew what he wanted.

"Yes," he said again. "And tomorrow, my dear, I shall be of age. Which means that I shan't have to wait any longer for my respected parent's consent. So. . . ."

"No, Aubrey. Not yet. Wait until I have my degree. You know very well that what first attracted you to me was the fact that we were interested in the same things. And you have said more than once that you wanted a fellow research worker as much as a wife. Wait, my dear. It won't be too long. Five months at the most."

Then the too serious young man allowed one of his rare moments of gallantry to flash to the surface.

"I'd wait five hundred years for you, my darling," he said.

* * *

Over a different table, in very different surroundings, Aubrey St. John Sheraton looked at his father. Manfred, the butler, brought in the decanter and glasses, left the two men to themselves. They took the first glass of wine in silence. In silence Sir Aubrey refilled his glass. His hand, his son could not help noticing, was not quite steady. Materialist that he was, the young man could not suppress a tremor of apprehension. For his materialism was that of the modern age—as redolent of mysticism as any religion of the past. He reached for the decanter.

His hand, in mid passage, was halted by that of the elder man.

"*No,*" said Sir Aubrey. Then, in a gentler voice, "No. You youngsters haven't the head that we had at your age—and *my* father wouldn't allow me more than one glass on the night of my twenty-first birthday."

"Is . . . is *it* so dreadful, then?"

"I shouldn't say dreadful. But strange, my boy, terribly strange. And yet . . . perhaps *you* will be able to understand something of it. You are the first of the family to become a scholar. And that is strange, too. For five hundred years, ever since the first Sir Aubrey shocked his contemporaries by competing with the merchants on their own ground, the main interest of the family has been finance. They said it was luck—the Sheratons always . . ." he groped for a telling word . . . "backed the right horse. They disavowed their faith and helped Henry sack the monasteries—but they were good Catholics again when Mary came to the throne. Elizabeth found them staunch Protestants with money to invest in the great maritime ventures. Under Charles I they supported Parliament—but were ready with a very welcome loan to his son when the Commonwealth disintegrated. But you know as well as I how we Sheratons have always ridden the tide of fortune. And it was never luck."

"The Secret?"

"Yes. But you've been into these things, Aubrey. I've looked at some of your books. I can't make head or tail of 'em—but they seem to say that Space and Time are all mixed up. Perhaps you'll understand it. . . . I don't pretend to. But come."

HE ROSE to his feet, picking up the object that had been before him on the polished mahogany throughout his talk. It was a key, a large key, in keeping with the antiquity of Sheraton Towers. He went to the corner of the room and picked up the lantern that Manfred had left there. In the bright glow of the electric light the feeble flame of the candle behind the translucent horn was barely visible. Sir Aub-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

rey seemed acutely conscious of the incongruity of his appearance as he stood there—an ageing, slightly paunchy man in a well cut dinner jacket, the huge key in his right hand, the antique light swinging from the other.

"Isn't it absurd?" he demanded. "The Towers are wired for electric light—and even if we blow a fuze electric torches are handy enough. But this is the very lantern the first Sir Aubrey used when he paid his periodic visits—and *he* has insisted that we use nothing else. . . ."

"But who, or what, is *he?*"

"Be patient. You will soon find out. And I must leave you alone with *him*—that is one of his conditions—for a heart to heart talk." He chuckled. "He'll find it a pleasant change to have a scientist instead of the usual financier to pass the time of day with!"

They left the dining room, darkly dignified in gleaming oak panelling, walked slowly along the long gallery hung with portraits of long dead Sheratons. In spite of the different attire—ranging from Tudor to Twentieth Century—every Sheraton was surprisingly similar. It was more than a family likeness. The young man was reminded of a bitter phrase coined after the first world conflict—"Hard faced men who had done well out of the war." He looked at the ancestral portraits with a new understanding—here were hard faced men who had done well out of every war, out of the slave trade and sweated labor, out of unknown and unguessable human misery and degradation. He was thankful that he had broken with family tradition, that through him the wealth amassed over five turbulent, unhappy centuries would be used to push back the frontiers of Man's knowledge. With Cecilia to help him. . . . His hand strayed to his jacket pocket, to the small box whose sharp outline he could feel through the thin cloth. It was the child of both their minds—but Cecilia's deft, patient fingers had had the actual fashioning of it. And if it worked—and he was sure that it would work—it would be of far greater moment than any absurd family secret. . . . He had almost dismissed the whole business from his mind as superstition when his father stopped at the door. And at the sight of the massive, ironbound timber, at least as strong as the wall in which it was set, all the half forgotten terrors of his childhood rushed back in one frightening flood.

He realized that Sir Aubrey was speaking.

"Aubrey, Aubrey! Take the light!"

MUTELY, he obeyed. The older man inserted the key into its hole, twisted gently at first, then with a kind of frightened irritation. He was muttering under his breath. Something inside the lock complained creakily, then clicked with muffled hesitation. The father took the door handle in both hands and turned. Reluctantly, the door swung inwards on its rusty, long dry hinges. Swinging the lantern with a nonchalance that he was far from feeling the young man followed the other into the room.

It was dark inside. With the door carefully shut and bolted, without even the thinnest streak of radiance penetrating from the relatively well lit picture gallery, the blackness was almost tangible. And when, at last, the feeble flame of the lantern burned steadily it did little more than drive the reluctant shadows scant inches from its focuss of dim, yellow light.

There was a long silence, then the baronet spoke.

"It is I," he said at last, "the nineteenth Sir Aubrey. And I bring my son,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

who will be the twentieth."

"It is well," came a voice from the darkness. "Proceed, Sir Aubrey. Acquaint the young man with our secrets."

Aubrey Sheraton stared into the blackness. But it was not the dim, misty, scarce visible *thing* that he saw there that sent cold tremors shivering over his skin like cat's-paws over placid water. Rather it was the feeling, the knowledge, that this voice was familiar. And yet, as he desperately reviewed the circle of his friends, of even his most remote acquaintance, there was none whose accents approximated even roughly to those of the being in the room.

". . . and when the first Sir Aubrey," his father was saying, "saw the apparition in his library, examining with apparent interest a map on the wall . . ." here he raised the lantern, allowed a glimpse of incredibly old parchment, of fabulous coastlines and monster haunted seas . . . "he, like Martin Luther on a like occasion, attacked the stranger with the first weapon to hand. It was a heavy pewter ink pot from the table. The missile struck the intruder's head. There was a flash of vivid blue light and, according to the old accounts, the stench of burning brimstone.

"Our ancester was a brave man but, frightened as much by his own temerity as anything, turned to flee. But the very immobility of the thing in his library halted him on the threshold. He went back to investigate. Greatly daring he tried to fell the intruder, at first with his hands then, later, with his sword. But it was like trying to strike a man clad in invisible, impregnable armour.

"At last he desisted. When he did so he became aware of a voice, a voice speaking an almost unintelligible variant of the English tongue. It told of a traveller who had come back in Time, from the Future. The chance, unlucky blow had damaged his apparatus, had condemned him to stasis until the centuries should slowly swing to his own age. He was doomed to long—how long we have never known—years of waiting. Sustenance of any kind he did not need, could not have taken. He could not die from any cause *before he was born.* Even so, that would have been preferable to an eternity with only his own thoughts for company.

"But he could ensure for himself company of a sort—although he is so far in advance of even you and I that the society of our progenitors must have been little better than that of the beasts of the field. And he could protect himself from the stares of the vulgar, from the certainty of attempts by the sincerely religious of those days to send him back to the Hell from which, in their eyes, he must have come. He could not have been harmed—but it is reasonable to suppose that when all else failed they would have had him bound and cast into the sea—or buried alive. And that, with the coming of his own age, would have meant sure and certain death.

"So he struck a bargain. In return for the sanctuary of Sheraton Towers, for the company afforded by periodic visits by his hosts, he would place at their disposal his not inconsiderable historical knowledge. From the very first to the present day he has kept to his side of the contract—that is how we came to get in on the ground floor of such things as aviation, radio and, lately, radio-active minerals.

"But now I must leave you with *him.* I shall never see *him* again, speak to *him* again. . . ." He broke off abruptly. Then, addressing the dim form in the darkness — "Whoever you are, I

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wish I could shake hands with you. . . ."

There was a sound that could have been a ghostly chuckle.

"Perhaps you have, Sir Aubrey. Or perhaps you will. Time is . . . strange. We have lived before . . . or have we? We shall live again . . . or shall we? But life is short, Sir Aubrey. Enjoy your Sheraton millions while you may. Good-bye."

THERE was a brief, dazzling flood of light when the baronet opened the door. Caught unawares Aubrey was not looking at the being by the wall. When the door was shut again it was darker than before.

"Bolt the door, Aubrey St. John Sheraton."

There was quiet compulsion in the hauntingly familiar accent, the projection of a will moulded and tempered by centuries of ageless, timeless waiting. The young man stumbled through the shadows, did as he was bid. He fumbled badly, he could not concentrate on even so commonplace a task. His mind was a turmoil. One part of it dismissed the whole story as the wildest fantasy, another part accepted it without reservation. It all tallied so well with the line of research upon which he and Cecilia were at present working. Unconsciously, his hand strayed to the small, flat box in his pocket. Perhaps the negative vibrator would achieve for its creators results as startling as those claimed by the being in the room. But it couldn't. If it were successful it would be put into use by men of all future ages. There would be long queues at strategic temporal points of altruistic travellers awaiting their turn to change the course of history. The ludicrous image made him, in spite of himself, laugh softly.

"Yes, it would be funny, wouldn't it?" remarked the other. Then—"You have a torch, I think. I'm sick and tired of this damned farthing dip!"

Startled into a state bordering upon panic Aubrey St. John Sheraton fumbled in his pocket for the torch he had smuggled in with him. It was one of the fountain pen variety, and projected a narrow, but intense, beam.

"That's better. Find something white —your handkerchief will do. Put it on the table, and place your torch so that the beam is reflected from it."

The details of the old library flashed into startling relief. Were it not for the circumstances the young man would have exclaimed his delight at the revelation of the rare, bibliophile's treasures, the intriguing examples of the early art of the cartographer. But what caught and held his eye were the bricks and mortar dimly seen through the diamond paned window—the fact that this surface, unexposed to the weather, looked almost as new as it must have done when that ancestral Aubrey built the concealing wall with his own hands. The extraneous circumstances of the burying alive were, somehow, more strange and dreadful than the victim of the act.

At last he tore his eyes from the blocked window, turned to look at the stranger. In spite of the better light he could see little more than he had done with the aid of the lanthern. Just a slightly built man, his body concealed from head to foot by a drab, grey cover-all. The dull lenses regarded him steadily from the mask, and he was aware of the eyes behind them without seeing them. On the forehead was a complexity of antennae and spidery filaments, in the centre of which glowed what seemed to be almost the duplicate of the thing in his pocket. He knew then what had happened. It was highly improbable that there was any other approach to Time Travel than

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that of negative vibrations. And he could see that the vibrator on the other's head had been damaged, was shining with a steady, though dim, radiance instead of the bright shimmering that must accompany its correct and proper functioning.

"Old Aubrey did that with his inkwell," said the Time Traveller. "He marooned me in Time, condemned me to 'creep in this petty pace from day to day, to the last syllable of recorded time. . . .'"

"Did you meet Shakespeare?" asked the young man eagerly.

"No. I tried to get the current Sir Aubrey to bring him round for a yarn—but the old basket didn't approve of play actors and such low types. And he threatened to hand me over to the Church if I insisted. . . . Of course, I held the whip hand really—a little misleading information and I could have ruined the Sheratons for ever. But it didn't suit me. And I want to get back to my own age—very badly. Although at times, in the last couple of hundred years or so, it's been damned boring. I did ask to be let out of my suit in good Victoria's golden reign—there was a time in which I could have used my scientific knowledge without being burned at the stake or anything unpleasant. But by this time the family knew it was on to something good—and your great grandfather wouldn't play. Oh, well, I suppose it's been worth waiting for. . . ."

"Your negative vibrator . . ." ventured Aubrey. "I think I can fix it. . . . I have studied these things—and it looks as though we have both attacked the problem from the same line of approach—Look!" He pulled the box out of his pocket, opened it, held the little translucent disc, its intricate complexity of coils and tubes dimly visible, before the other's eyes. "Look!"

"A little to your right, please. You forget that I can't move my head, that apart from such movements as I can make inside this suit I'm frozen. . . . Yes, it should work. . . ."

AUBREY raised his hands to the other's head—then hesitated. After all, he was a Sheraton. Scientist he might be—but he had not broken with family tradition to the extent of giving something for nothing. The little disc in his pocket represented hours of toil. The cost of its materials—which was not small—did not enter into his calculations. But he and Cecilia deserved some recompense for their exertions.

"That suit," he said. "I haven't been able to work out all the details yet. . . . You won't be in any great hurry *now*, surely? I'd like to take a trip in Time myself, and then I'd like to make a careful copy of the suit. . . ."

The other hesitated before replying. Then—"Time is of no real importance to one who has waited as long as I have. You'd better get the suit off me first. . . ."

The fastenings were strangely complex and it was like working under water. Had the negative vibrator been working properly it would have been impossible for one from a different Time to manipulate them at all—the suit and all about it—except to its wearer—would have been as rigid as armour plate. As it was Aubrey was sweating heavily when the grey fabric fell at last from the Traveller's body. It was the Traveller, his hands and arms now free, who removed the mask, or helmet. He let it fall to the floor. His hands went up to his face.

"What a relief," he said, his voice muffled but still with that haunting familiarity. "My nose has been itching for the last five hundred years. . . ."

Aubrey Sheraton paid no heed. He

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

had picked up the suit, the helmet, was examining them eagerly. They were just as he would have made them himself, followed faithfully the design that even now lay among his papers. Under his eager fingers the little disc of the negative vibrator came reluctantly from its fastenings. He was more careful with the undamaged one, worked slowly, made the delicate connections with infinite care. Then— "Help me on with this, will you?"

Mutely, the Traveller obeyed. He concentrated upon the back of the suit. Aubrey found himself wishing that he could get a look at his face. But that could wait until he returned. He realized that he hadn't set the controls for any time in the past, and they as he would, garbed as he now was, he could not bend his neck sufficiently to look at the dials on his breastplate. Before he could remove his helmet to do so the Traveller finished the fastenings at the back of the suit and came round into his narrow field of vision. He kept his face averted. His hand went to Aubrey's chest with a swift, decisive motion. Aubrey began to step back, his own hands went up to ward off the sudden attack. But he was too late. He felt rather than heard the click of the starting switch as it was depressed . . . and then all vanished in a swirling, formless grey mist.

* * *

The map on the wall held his attention. He had seen it before—but now its colors glowed in bright afternoon sunlight instead of the feeble glimmer of an electric torch; were fresh and bright from the artist's brush, not dimmed by age.

A sound, faint and far away as from another world, made him turn. By the table was a frightened looking, bearded gentleman, richly clad in a costume that he identified as Tudor. He began to raise his right hand in what he hoped would be interpreted as a peaceful gesture, felt as he did so that all this had happened before, that he was doing the wrong thing.

Before he could find the switch on his breastplate the other picked a heavy, pewter ink pot from his table, threw it with force and accuracy. As it connected with the negative vibrator Aubrey felt an agonizing shock flash through his body, followed at once by dead numbness. He found, after a few seconds, that he could still move his members—but only within the rigid confines of his suit.

He knew, then, why the Traveller had kept his face averted, why the voice had struck such familiar chords.

And he knew that he would have a long time to wait for his coming of age.

THE END

BUGS FROM PERU

by JUNE LURIE

ALTHOUGH most of us feel that we already have way too many bugs in the United States, twenty-eight thousand Peruvian bugs recently arrived in New York City. The bugs were collected by Mr. John Pallister of the American Museum of Natural History. He went on a nine months', one man expedition into the jungles of Peru, armed with cyanide bottles, forceps, flashlight, and a butterfly net. He went into the huge dark limestone caves in search of rare bugs. He found many that scientists had never seen before. He brought back huge, fierce beetles that were nearly a foot long, and cave-dweller spiders, and giant moths that are brilliantly colored and with wing spreads of more than ten inches. He also found a Peruvian lantern fly which terrorizes the natives. The lantern fly is seven inches long and has a head shaped like an alligator's. It glows in the dark, and the natives say that it kills people with just one bite, but Mr. Pallister has disproved their belief.

* * *

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The World's Most Famous Illusion

by VINCENT H. GADDIS

IT WAS along a roadside in India several years ago that William Beebe, famous scientist, witnessed the world's most famous illusion. With two companions at his side, he watched the fakir toss a rope into the air—a rope that mysteriously remained rigid yike a pole. As a small boy climbed the rope, one of the men timed his ascent with a stop-watch, while the other took a photograph of the scene. At the top of the rope the boy vanished, and the rope, suddenly limp, fell to the ground.

The late Arthur Train, noted novelist, to whom Dr. Beebe gave his account of his observation, wrote: "Dr. Beebe says that apparently none of the natives along the road noticed what was going on, and that the exposed plate of the camera when subsequently developed showed neither rope nor boy." It's an old story, this report of cameras refusing to record what human observers see, and the explanation usually given is mass hypnotism.

But is hypnotism the answer? Psychologists do not believe that mass hypnotism can be performed, although they do admit that mass hallucinations sometimes occur. For half a century the controversy has been raging: Is the rope trick fact or fancy—reality or myth? Now, at last, a careful study of reports made by responsible witnesses is yielding light on the enigma, and a partial solution, at least, can be offered. But the mystery, to some extent, remains a puzzle because it involves an unsolved problem of psychological research.

Fundamentally, the rope trick consists of the vanishing of a boy at the top of a strangely suspended rope, but classical accounts, such as that given in the Lahore *Civil and Military Gazette* in 1888, have added details. One is that the fakir climbs the rope after the boy has disappeared, screams are heard as parts of the boy's body fall to the ground, and then the fakir appears coming down the rope. The various parts of the boy's body are gathered together, a cloth is thrown over them, then shortly afterward the boy emerges smiling and perfectly intact. Another variation is the appearance of the boy at the back of the crowd of spectators after he has vanished.

The origin of this fabled feat lies buried in Asian antiquity. It is supposed to have originated in China, and Marco Polo referred to it in the thirteenth century. Later, in 1635, it was observed by an Arabian traveler from Tangier in a palace courtyard in China. "I was so astonished," he wrote, "that I suffered a palpitation of the heart, but I was given a cordial and recovered."

Many ancient court records in India refer to performances of the mystery. The Vedas, sacred writings of the ancient Hindus that were transcribed two millenniums ago, use the rope trick—"familiar to everyone, but admittedly an illusion"—as an example that life itself is *maya* or illusion.

In more modern times, as world travel increased, there were floods of reports. Carl Hertz, the conjurer, told of the observation of a William Athey, of London, considered a reliable witness, in his book *A Modern Mystery Merchant*. A prominent Indian living in France, C. C. Sen, declared he watched the trick performed in Calcutta in the open air. Tharagan Matthew, author of *India: Paradise of Mystery*, claimed he saw it in Delhi, and Sri Sankharacharya, high priest of Madura, announced that he possessed documentary evidence that it had been performed many times in the past.

The Indian Prince Nawabzada Nusrat Ali Mirza, of Mourshidabad, has written that he observed the feat several times as a boy in his father's court; on one occasion he had watched it from behind curtains unnoticed by the rest of the spectators so he was sure he could not have been hypnotized. Another observer, G. P. Curtis, formerly in the Indian army, reported that he saw the mystery performed at Khandala in 1902 by a troupe of Hindu jugglers.

One of the most remarkable of observations was that of Miss Gretchen Green, well-known humanitarian and advocate of "seeing-eye" dogs for the blind. In 1934, while on a boat in the Ganges river at Benares, not far from the famous funeral pyres, she watched a fakir on the river bank throw a rope into the air, climb it, and vanish. The feat was performed near a grove of bamboo trees, and she adds: "It was just at twilight when everything was indistinct and the air was obscured by the smoke of sacrificial fires." This detail, as noted by Miss Green, was later to assume great importance.

IN THE meantime many western magicians journeyed to the eastern home of mystery and vainly attempted to see the rope trick. Many rewards were offered. In 1876 King Edward VII visited India and had the country searched for a rope performer without success. In 1898 Sidney Lenz, the bridge authority, made a special trip to the east that ended in failure. Harry Kellar, Howard Thurston, Dante, John Mulholland—all have returned disappointed.

On the other hand, it has been repeatedly pointed out that negative opinions cannot be regarded as evidence that the trick is a myth. One

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

positive report by a reliable witness is worth a thousand reports of failure to see it. Actually these failures to see the feat only seem to prove that, first, very few fakirs know how to present the illusion; second, that they guard the secret very carefully; third, that very special conditions are required for its success; and, fourth, that the secret is of such a nature that expert observers would not be mystified.

Interest in the problem was heightened during the years between the two great wars, and produced a flood of fraudulent photographs. In England a performer who called himself Karachi, but who turned out to be Arthur Darby, a conjurer, published pictures of the trick as allegedly performed at Plymouth, but the hoax was exposed by Harry Price, a London psychical research investigator. The "Cheltenham Rope Trick" turned out to be the successful effort of a group of magicians to fool some press reporters. In the United States, Joseph Dunninger, the well-known mind-reading performer, had some remarkable trick photographs taken in a New York park with the assistance of several Hindu students from Columbia University.

When the Magic Circle, an English magical organization, offered a reward of $25,000 for a performance of the feat, Dr. Alexander Cannon, British psychiatrist with mystical leanings, announced that he would present it in the Royal Albert Hall for $275,000. He stated that this amount of money would be required to heat the hall to tropic temperature, and to import Yogis and special sand from India. But the magicians were quick to point out that there is a vast difference between performing the illusion in a building and out in the open air. In fact, several American and European magicians have presented the spectacle as a stage effect.

While these more sensational aspects of the controversy were engaging public attention, a small group of scholarly students of magic were quietly working on the problem. Where there was so much smoke, they decided, there must be some fire. Since the illusion was seldom performed and all efforts to witness presentations by the offer of rewards failed, it appeared obvious that very special conditions were necessary for its performance. Perhaps the secret was more simple than commonly believed.

A survey was made of all reports by responsible witnesses and curious similarities were noticed. In the historical Hertz report the mystery had been performed at dusk when a thick haze was present. Likewise, the more recent and careful observation of Miss Green was at twilight, near trees, as smoke obscured the atmosphere. It was recalled that John Maskelyne, the famous conjurer of the last generation, had expressed the opinion that there was a definite foundation for the many reports—"possibly a very simple trick, of which travelers had given exaggerated accounts."

More reports came in and were studied in the light of the earlier stories. Victor Farelli, the English illusionist, located an officer in the British West Indies Regiment who had watched the trick performed in Cape Town, South Africa, by a troupe of Indian jugglers. This officer, a careful observer, said that the Indians only presented the mystery on one occasion, that is was performed on a street between large buildings and not in the public square where they usually appeared, and that there was a heavy low-lying mist at the time.

IN THE majority of the reports the presence of mist, fog, smoke, haze or the darkness of dusk was repeatedly noticed. The students decided that the secret of the illusion was a strong rope or cable stretched across the space between two trees or tall buildings. The rope thrown into the air was provided with a pronged hook that attached itself to the cable, and the boy, a young acrobat, after climbing the rope and releasing it

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from the cable, then made his way along the cable to the nearest tree or nearby roof. A "double" of the boy could easily "appear" at the rear of the crowd of spectators as the rope fell and make his way to the scene with loud yells.

This explanation was confirmed during the war by a correspondent stationed in India who witnessed the trick on the grounds of a large estate. In his account published in the *War Cry*, a British service periodical, he referred to the low-lying mist present, and added that he noticed the hook on the end of the rope and the actual cable which was stretched between two tall trees. He only observed the cable because he suspected its existence and made a special effort to look for it.

It is a well-know human trait for untrained observers to exaggerate their accounts of mysteries, and this tendency increases subconsciously with the passing of time. In addition to the romantic, mystical atmosphere of the East which the Indian fakir uses to full advantage, the very reputation of the rope trick acts to induce a condition of uncritical bewilderment. It is quite possible, therefore, that this simple method of performance has given birth to many reports that suggest miracle.

There remain, however, a few accounts that cannot be so easily explained. Dr. Beebe's observation, for example, was in full, brilliant daylight, and his camera refused to record the scene his eyes observed. Moreover, the rope trick does not stand alone in this greater puzzle; many reliable travelers have told of incredible feats of magic that can only be explained in terms of mass hallucination or hypnotism.

Psychologists agree that mass hallucinations sometimes occur. As to hypnotism, it is a relatively new study in our youngest major science—psychology. On the other hand, oriental mystics have known of hypnotism for centuries, and it is quite possible that a few highly trained fakirs have knowledge of the subject that we of the West do not as yet possess. Mass hypnotism would simply consist of an induced mass hallucination.

The problem is the method used in so mesmerizing an entire audience, and in view of our knowledge of hypnotism only one method is conceivable—telepathic impressions. Since the probable existence of telepathy is finding increasing acceptance among scientists in recent years, this ability on the part of a few Indian fakirs may be regarded as a tentative hypothesis. Only future research will fully solve the problem.

Dr. Beebe is not the only investigator to tell of a photographic puzzle. M. Paul Dare, news editor of *The Times of India*, has recently reported his mysterious failure to take a photograph of a rare image of the goddess, Gayatri, at the Temple of Old Mahableshwar while making some archaeological studies. A Brahmin priest, who was present, predicted that he would have no success, but Dare smiled and made several exposures. That evening in his own darkroom he developed the films. All of the negatives were alike.

To his astonishment Dare discovered that the wall behind the idol was clearly visible and all surrounding objects were sharply reproduced, but where the idol should have been in the films all the negatives were completely blank. M. Dare has no solution to offer. His report is only another addition to the long story of mystery in India, home of enigmas and fantastic fabled feats.

THE END

EGYPTIAN BELIEFS

by FRAN FERRIS

ONE look through the Egyptian section of any modern museum devoted to the history of man and we are immediately taken with one outstanding fact. Among no other people was there such an extraordinary devotion to the care of the dead. Egyptian life was more than threaded with consideration of the dead—*living* was *for* the preparation of properly entering the other world.

Examination of Egyptian tombs show them to be equipped with everything possible from food to instruments of war, all these to aid in making the sacred journey easier for the deceased. Where does all this concern for the dead come from? Obviously it is traceable directly to the peculiar Egyptian religious beliefs. Every Egyptian lavished so much of his wealth and energy to the construction of "an eternal house' that we sometimes wonder how he lived as well as he did.

The Egyptian believed that every person possessed a soul, though the soul was not connected directly with the body. Instead it was imagined as a body flitting about the trees, or a crocodile basking in the sun, or perhaps a lotus flower on the banks of the river. Consequently everything that lived had some religious significance. Everywhere the Egyptian was surrounded then by "souls." It behooved him to be conscious of his ultimate destiny. But note that this "soul" was not exactly the same as ours. He had another spirit though to account for that.

Every Egyptian believed himself to be animated by a spiritual double, a counterpart more nearly of what we think as the soul. This force, this being, he called a "ka" or "double," something like a "doppelgänger." This dual personality came into the world with the body at birth, accompanied it throughout life, and went with

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the body into the next world upon death. The relationship of the body or "ka" and of the "soul" were all very shadowy and confused. Even the Egyptian who accepted these concepts did so without attempting to understand their complete relationship. He couldn't, for they were simply too tenuous.

These three entities, "ka," soul, and body, upon death went to the netherworld. Just where this was is open to some question. In the west was a world of the dead where Ra, or Re, the sun-god, descended into his grave every night. Egyptians called their dead "westerners" because of this and they always endeavored to locate their cemeteries on the western border of a town or desert. In this netherworld waited the dead for the sun-god to appear to them during the night. Thus they were able to bathe in his glory and they pulled the ship that carried him through their caverns in preparation for his return to the earth the next day.

In addition the Egyptian saw the sky as a heaven, too, where the spirits of the dead, departing as birds had risen, had been changed into perpetual stars by Ra. Another heaven existed which was supposed to be a gigantic lentil field. Here food was more plentiful than anywhere and everything grew to gigantic size. This field was surrounded by water and there was a ferryman to take the dead across. The ferryman, who was called "turnface" because he was always stationed backward in order to pole the boat, asked those who wished to enter heaven if they had led the good life on earth. If their reply was yes, he took them across. If no, he refused them. This seems to be one of the first times in the religious history of man that the test of entering heaven was dependent upon the type of life one had lived on earth. But usually, entering into the heavenly kingdom was not very hedged with strong moral restrictions. It was more a gesture than anything else.

Osiris, god of the dead, was the dominating element in the consideration of the departed. Every Egyptian that died believed that he too might become like Osiris who had been plunged into the underworld only to arise, become god-like, and rule his very prison. Such an intense interest in the life after death brought with it the building of more and more elaborate tombs for the dead. From simple holes in the ground, tombs became the huge pyramids that cost so much in sweat and toil and lives. Because it was of the utmost importance to safeguard the dead no effort was avoided to make tombs true repositories of the dead and the things they needed. Hence, often there was more of value in the tombs of an Egyptian town than in the town itself. Fortunate it was, indeed, that Egypt was so wealthy in natural resources and peoples or it would never have survived this extensive concern with its dead. Those who cared for the dead, arranged the duplicate image of the dead one, supplied food and drink for the tomb, kept it clean, and did all the chores connected with tomb-keeping, became the first priesthood. Endowments were provided by the dead to enable the hiring of the priests to care for them while they were in the tombs. In the case of a large tomb many priests were required.

* * *

COMING NEXT MONTH:—

"QUEEN OF THE PANTHER WORLD"

By BERKELEY LIVINGSTON

THE GREAT NEW NOVEL BY ONE OF YOUR FAVORITE FANTASY WRITERS!

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

By LEE OWENS

"OLD JEFFREY"

IN THE year 1716, John Wesley, father of the founder of Methodism, and his family were spending a winter evening in quiet study in the Rectory in Lincolnshire. Suddenly the silence was broken by the screams of a servant who was clearing away the supper things. She dropped a tray of dishes when she heard groaning in the dining room. Mrs. Wesley opened the dining room to show her that there was no one in there, and told her that she had only been frightened by the wind in the chimneys. Just then, a manservant ran in from the kitchen saying that he had heard a strange noise, like someone groaning their last, and there was the look of horror on his face.

Mrs. Wesley was puzzled at this but still thought it might only be the wind and asked that Mr. Wesley might not be disturbed. But soon after she had joined her children in the living room, they all heard strange knockings coming from first one part of the house and then another. They searched the rooms but found nothing unusual, so they went to bed. Mr. Wesley had been busy in his study and had heard nothing so they told him nothing of the noises.

Mrs. Wesley was quite an unusual woman. She was very religious, scholarly, and independent in her thoughts. By the time she was forty, she had given birth to ninteen children. She believed that the spirits of the dead had the power to communicate with the living.

For a week, every member of the family, except Mr. Wesley, had heard the mysterious knockings. Mrs. Wesley believed that some spirit had come to warn them of impending disaster, and that the sounds were not audible to the one to whom they foretold evil.

One night Mr. Wesley was awakened by the strange knockings, and his wife told of the previous happenings. He didn't believe there was anything supernatural about it, but said it was no doubt the work of some drunkard in the community. So he called his watch dog to scare off the intruder. The dog barked for a minute and then ran back to his master for protection. Though the knockings continued, Mr. Wesley tried to account for them saying that it was rats or water-pipes, till one night his plate started to spin around in front of him as the family sat down for supper. So the minister spoke harshly to the ghost for disturbing innocent children and said that if he had any further business with him, his should come to his study. As he spoke, there were loud crashes, and sounds of heavy chains being dragged across stone floors. The dog was whining with fright. Mr. Wesley went to his study, being pushed along by the ghost that disturbed him in many ways till he could not work. He tried to think of a way to rid himself and his family of this mysterious intruder. The Rectory was so filled with noise, especially at night, that sleep was impossible. They often called in their close friends to witness the strange knocking.

THE children called the ghost "Old Jeffrey" and tried to make him reveal himself. One of the little children said she didn't believe in ghosts and as she said it, the rappings came right under her feet, and she ran off to bed. The big warming pan beside her bed began to clang and fell to the floor, and the latch on her door danced up and down. The children were all so frightened they ran to their parents. After that, Mr. Wesley sat in the nursery every night trying to keep old Jeffrey from plaguing his children. But the ghost was mean and made up all sorts of weird tricks. Some of the children saw strange animals running under their beds, and the ghost kept putting out their candles. One of the children said she saw the ghost come from the attic dressed in a long white robe which trailed out behind him.

The ghost was almost more than the family could endure. They decided he must be a Jacobite, for whenever Mr. Wesley prayed for the King during family prayers, he would be rudely interrupted. But when he left the royal family out of his prayers, he was not disturbed.

Their son John, founder of Methodism, who was attending Westminster at the time, believed in the existence of this ghost in his father's house till the end of his life. He thought that it was an evil spirit sent by Satan to punish his father for some early misdeed.

Well-meaning friends tried to persuade the Wesleys to leave the Rectory, but Mr. Wesley said he would not show himself as a coward. He thought that this agent of the devil had come to him to test his faith and patience, and he de-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

clared that he would never flee from the devil. Quite some time passed before Old Jeffrey left the Rectory never to return. John Wesley always believed he was a supernatural manifestation, and was interested in psychic phenomena. One of the other children who had married a druggist in London, said that for more than thirty years she had been warned by old Jeffrey of coming misfortunes.

* * *

TRIAL BY FIRE

IN DISCUSSING phenomena of a psychic nature it is almost impossible to make an objective case of a study for the simple reason that listeners will believe nothing that they cannot see. It is easy to say "I had an unusual dream last night and it means the following. . . .", but nine times out of ten the listener will demand an impossible proof. This applies to almost every field of those border-line sciences of the psychic. Science insists on phenomena and events which can be duplicated again and again by what they call "impartial observers" and who are really so biased against what they are witnessing that they are about as objective as a precinct captain during an election.

This is a sad state of affairs for it is so very hard to explain to people that there are things above and beyond their simple sciences. Shakespeare knew this when he had Hamlet say "There are things 'twixt Heaven and Earth that thou hast not dreamt of, Horatio." Would that more people would understand that.

More and more, psychic affairs are coming to the fore and are being put on a clear basis that is irrefutable.

This has been true always among primitive peoples who have not yet learned to doubt everything. It is even true among certain modern peoples, to a greater extent among some, than others. For example, the Transylvania mountains in Hungary have produced some remarkable and fascinating events in the realm of the unusual.

To a lesser extent, among mountain folk here in the United States, such things are often found —as faith-healing and the like. One cannot ridicule and dismiss these events with a shrug of the shoulders. There is a famous case before which science stands embarrassed though it is not often mentioned these days.

In Tennessee, in a small mountain town called Case, there occurred an event that set medical men back on their heels. During the week of February 11th, nineteen twenty-seven, Dr. K. R. Wissen of a well-known hospital in New York went on a hunting trip with some friends. They maintained a mountain lodge, fully stocked and modernly equipped. Very often, in the evening the host would take the guests, including the good doctor, to witness some of the odd dances and affairs that the mountain people held. Sometimes they would interview the ancient crones, the "hexers," and listen to their fantastic stories of witchery. Of course they were all amused by these things and took none of them seriously.

Rumor was rampant among the townsfolk that the Carren boy, a young lad of about twelve years—ages were never known exactly—had had an extremely severely burned hand which had miraculously healed. By chance he was sent to the lodge one evening to deliver to this host and his guests some chickens that had previously been ordered.

The shy boy stumbled into the kitchen of the lodge, placed his parcels down, when the host invited him in to talk with him. The boy, embarrassed and ill at ease among these sophisticates, ambled into the living room before the fire and started to talk with him. Yes, he admitted that he had been severely burned in a forge owned by his uncle. By accident, he said, he had picked up a red-hot horseshoe. It had not hurt him, he said, and the slight burn had healed in less than ten minutes. Dr. Wissen laughed at the story and asked to see the boy's hand. He examined it closely. There was no trace of a burn. "Why did you lie to us," asked the doctor, "you know you've not been burned in years?" Stubbornly the boy insisted that he had. Sadly the doctor and his compatriots shook their heads. "These mountain people—what could you expect?"

Five seconds later, they had changed their tune. Nonchalantly, the boy strolled over to the open fireplace and pulled out a flaming brand with one hand. Then without fear, he grasped the red-hot-glowing other end in his left hand. There was the odor of singed flesh. Not a cry from the boy. He tossed the brand back into the fire, stepped up to the doctor and said: "Look." The man looked. There was nothing to be seen. Not a trace of a burn existed. Dumbfounded the man questioned the boy and asked him to do it again. And again the boy repeated the process. Again—nothing.

Then he left. The doctor talked with him for days, but he would neither repeat the experiment nor describe what motivated him. He had no idea of why the flame that would have burned anyone else did not hurt him.

The matter was eventually forgotten, though it was told once or twice in medical circles before Dr. Wissen was politely laughed at. The raised eyebrow, the casual glance from one to another was enough to stop him from talking too much. Dr. Wissen planned to make a great to-do about it, but he realized the futility of it. The matter is no longer referred to.

When such things happen in these times and in our modern world why is it that men cannot be scientific and objective about it? The Miracles of Lourdes in France are treated as skeptically. Dr. Alexis Carrel ventured to mention it a number of times and was ignored. Cannot the wise men see? Some day there will surely be an answer.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE TOMB OF KING ZER

NOT all Egyptian kings were buried in pyramidal structures. For one thing, even wealthy Egypt could not support the building of innumerable tombs in the form of gigantic pyramids. Too much time, money and labor was required. As a consequence, after the fall of the *great* dynasties, lesser Egyptian kings contented themselves with building modest structures in the form of conventional buildings of extreme massiveness and strength to prevent their degradation by grave-robbers. The swirling ever-changing sands of the desert would cover these buildings in no time at all, and many of them were untouched until recent times. Some have not yet been discovered. And as the sands retreat, many more will be discovered.

Zer, king of all the Egyptians, noblest of them all to his mind, builded better than he knew. He had constructed for his death, a building three hundred feet long and thirty feet wide. It was made of solid sandstone faced with granite to resist erosion by sand-blasting. The interior of the tomb, was merely a tunnel running the length of the building, eight feet high, eight feet wide, and ingress was provided at only one end. There were numerous additional passages provided for lesser personages. The whole creation was nearly as theft-proof as it could be possibly made.

Time passed and the glory of Zer and his Queen become as nothing. Carefully they were prepared for their long journey to the arms of Horus. Ra smiled benevolently down on them and secure in their death-trappings they undertook the long trip until they should be summoned once again to live on this earth.

Nice as their thoughts must have been prior to their end, they calculated without time and men. The tomb, buried under the shifting sands, endured for two thousand years and more. No human, no living thing—except an insect violated the burial vault. Zer and his Queen rested securely. But the desert is treacherous. The sand whirled away and the tomb in ghostly splendor was exposed to the prying—and greedy—eyes of men.

FAROUD TIY was a soldier of a native regiment the night of the exposure in eighteen fifty-seven. Faroud Tiy rode slowly across the desert sand that night when his gaze suddenly came upon this splendid building, apparently untouched by time or the desert. His were the first eyes to fall on it these many, many centuries.

Now Faroud was a good man, an honest man, but he remembered the tales of fabulous wealth that the English archeologists told. They said the tombs were the hoarding places of the ancient wealth of the Egypt of Antiquity. Tethering his horse to a stone, Faroud looked for the entrance. He found it, and it was the one thing damaged in the whole building. The cement had given way beneath the strain of the shifting building and the slab-like seal had fallen away. It was simply a matter of walking in. Faroud obeyed his impulse. Using an improvised torch of a wooden stick, he explored the tomb. He jammed his pockets with gems that lay strewn about the stone floor. In his almost unnatural and insane frenzy he searched everywhere. King Zer's massive sarcophagus was too heavy to move, but the lighter Queen's was tipped on edge easily. Faroud pushed it off balance. Thunderously, it fell and spilled its grisly contents on the granite floor. Zer's noble queen, still perfectly preserved, lay in the dust! In an effort to break into the wrappings Faroud tore at her arm. With a crunch of ripping wrappings, the dessicated thing broke off the corpse! Half-terrified, Faroud stepped back—and tripped over a small chest. As he fell, he bumped into a precariously balanced stone sacrophagus containing a servant's body. The masive thing tilted, moved ponderously, and fell with a dull resounding thud in the gloomy tomb—crushing Faroud into the granite. There was one scream, the torch went out, and then silence.

The events above were reconstructed from Dr. Petrie's account given later when he came upon the tomb and discovered what had been attempted. The skeleton of the Egyptian soldier Faroud, was identified and it lay in the grimy remnants of its uniform. How often such a similar tragedy may have been enacted no one knows, but very often tombs have been discovered, their contents removed by thorough-going thieves. Perhaps, in Faroud's case, some grim Egyptian god looked down and laughed at the justice rendered Faroud purely by his own greed.

* * *

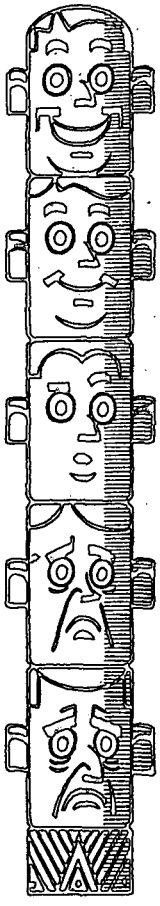
HAUNTED HUNTERS

JANUARY 17, 1920. It was a cold and bitter morning when John Kern and his wife Lorraine decided to leave the small Wisconsin lodge to hunt. Several of the year-'round inhabitants of the Waukasa region where the cabin was located had told them that it was just on such mornings that their luck would be best. The weather would be with them and game would "be afoot." Tearing themselves away from the log-fire raging in the fireplace, they started to dress warmly, thoroughly anticipating the minus twenty degrees temperature. They weren't strangers to cold!

Their situation was unique in that they were a honeymoon couple who had decided to eschew the usual civilized, elaborate hotel-Florida arrangements that were popular among their set. They decided to spend their time alone with each other in real isolation, and as John's father, a successful Chicago businessman owned the cottage they decided that in spite of the weather they would honeymoon under the wintry temperatures. Both

(Continued on page 166)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



THE TOP MEN in Industrial Posts often are I. C. S. graduates

THE men holding the top industrial jobs didn't get there by wishful thinking. They had ambition and intelligence . . . and they applied them to obtaining essential *training*. Many enrolled with the International Correspondence Schools, famous for 56 years as a training system for industry and commerce.

When a committee of ranking U. S. scientists voted Modern Pioneer medals to the outstanding inventors of the past 25 years, 59 of the award winners stated over their own signatures that they had studied I. C. S. technical courses.

Successful I. C. S. graduates are numbered by the thousands and they include presidents, production managers, chief engineers, head chemists of some of the greatest airplane, railroad, steel, chemical and electric companies in the nation.

You have ambition and intelligence. I. C. S. has the training you need to get to the top. Mail the coupon today.

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS

BOX 6203-B, SCRANTON 9, PENNA.

Without cost or obligation, please send me full particulars about the course BEFORE which I have marked X:

Air Conditioning and Plumbing Courses
- ☐ Air Conditioning
- ☐ Heating ☐ Plumbing
- ☐ Refrigeration ☐ Steam Fitting

Chemistry Courses
- ☐ Chemical Engineering
- ☐ Chemistry, Analytical
- ☐ Chemistry, Industrial
- ☐ Chemistry, Mfg. Iron & Steel
- ☐ Petroleum Refining ☐ Plastics
- ☐ Pulp and Paper Making

Civil Engineering, Architectural and Mining Courses
- ☐ *Architecture*
- ☐ Architectural Drafting
- ☐ Bridge and Building Foreman
- ☐ Building Estimating
- ☐ Civil Engineering
- ☐ Coal Mining
- ☐ Contracting and Building
- ☐ Highway Engineering
- ☐ Lumber Dealer
- ☐ Reading Structural Blueprints
- ☐ Sanitary Engineering
- ☐ Structural Drafting
- ☐ Structural Engineering
- ☐ *Surveying and Mapping*

Communications Courses
- ☐ Electronics
- ☐ Practical Telephony
- ☐ Radio, General
- ☐ Radio Operating
- ☐ Radio Servicing
- ☐ Telegraph Engineering

Electrical Courses
- ☐ Electrical Drafting
- ☐ Electrical Engineering
- ☐ Electric Light and Power
- ☐ Lighting Technician
- ☐ *Practical Electrician*

Internal Combustion Engines Courses
- ☐ Auto Technician ☐ Aviation
- ☐ Diesel-Electric
- ☐ Diesel Engines ☐ Gas Engines

Mechanical Courses
- ☐ Aeronautical Engineer's, Jr.
- ☐ Aircraft Drafting
- ☐ Flight Engineer
- ☐ Forging ☐ Foundry Work
- ☐ Heat Treatment of Metals
- ☐ Industrial Engineering
- ☐ *Industrial Metallurgy*
- ☐ Machine Shop
- ☐ Mechanical Drafting
- ☐ Mechanical Engineering
- ☐ Mold-Loft Work
- ☐ Patternmaking—Wood, Metal
- ☐ Reading Shop Blueprints
- ☐ Sheet-Metal Drafting
- ☐ Sheet-Metal Worker
- ☐ *Ship Drafting* ☐ Ship Fitting
- ☐ Tool Designing
- ☐ Toolmaking
- ☐ Welding—Gas and Electric

Railroad Courses
- ☐ Air Brake ☐ Car Inspector
- ☐ Diesel Locomotive
- ☐ Locomotive Engineer
- ☐ Locomotive Fireman
- ☐ Railroad Section Foreman

Steam Engineering Courses
- ☐ Boilermaking
- ☐ Combustion Engineering
- ☐ *Engine Running*
- ☐ Marine Engineering
- ☐ Steam Electric ☐ Steam Engines

Textile Courses
- ☐ Cotton Manufacturing
- ☐ Rayon Weaving
- ☐ Textile Designing
- ☐ Woolen Manufacturing

Business and Academic Courses
- ☐ Accounting ☐ Advertising
- ☐ Arithmetic ☐ Bookkeeping
- ☐ Business Administration
- ☐ Business Correspondence
- ☐ Certified Public Accounting
- ☐ Commercial
- ☐ *Commercial Art*
- ☐ Cost Accounting
- ☐ Federal Tax
- ☐ First Year College
- ☐ Foremanship ☐ French
- ☐ Good English ☐ High School
- ☐ Higher Mathematics
- ☐ Motor Traffic ☐ Postal Service
- ☐ Salesmanship ☐ Secretarial
- ☐ Sign Lettering
- ☐ Spanish ☐ Stenography
- ☐ Traffic Management

Name_____ Home Address_____

City_____ State_____

Age_____ Present Position_____ Working Hours_____ A.M. to_____ P.M.

Special tuition rates to members of the Armed Forces. Special discount to World War II Veterans.
Canadian residents send coupon to International Correspondence Schools Canadian, Ltd., Montreal, Canada.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(Continued from page 164)

were active and athletic and in the cold and silence they found something stimulating in each other. Their loved seemed to flower. Occasionally they footed it the twenty miles to the nearest town of Orkton to replenish their supplies. Because both had plenty of time they made the honeymoon a prolonged vacation. They were completely happy, spending their time talking, enjoying each other's company, reading, preparing the simple meals and discovering the almost intolerable beauty of Nature in the rough. And so it was that a couple very much in love with each other set out that morning.

They proceeded into the woods, heavily snow-laden, up to their knees in snow, laughing and joking the while. Both were armed with excellent hunting rifles, well-oiled and cared for.

Suddenly, after they had tramped a wearying mile or two into the forest, Lorraine put a hand on John's shoulder with the whispered injunction stopping him. He halted. Lorrained pointed ahead. Standing there in all his pristine glory was a full-grown moose! But this wasn't moose country. John raised his rifle as did Lorraine. Carefully they aimed at the buck, hoping that their combined fire would make up for any lack of accuracy. Before they could press their triggers—like a fading image—the animal disappeared. It vanished not as a fleeing animal but as a ghost. Thinking that they were seeing things, Lorraine and John disregarded the incident and spent a good portion of the morning in the forest. They saw nothing and towards noon returned to their cabin-lodge.

ABOUT a hundred feet from the cabin they stopped dead in their tracks. Standing staring at them was the same animal they had both seen earlier. Not moving perceptibly they brought their weapons to their shoulders, aimed carefully and were about to fire when—the animal *faded* from view. How to account for it? Both returned at once to the cabin and began to talk animatedly about what they had seen and whether or not it could have been their imagination. It wasn't they concluded. They had seen something—that they were sure of.

While the incident amused and in a way startled them, they tended to think little of it. The matter was completely forgotten until a week later when they went back into town and by pure chance related it to some of the old timers whiling away time in the store. Of course *they* had an explanation for the vanishing moose. It was, they said, the ghost of a long dead animal, simply haunting its old hunting grounds. But, the couple both protested that there were no tracks—all the reason more that it was the ghost came the answer.

Many times later they told the story in small gatherings and were laughed at, but they firmly adhered to what they thought they saw. A psychologist friend dismissed it with the usual "self-delusion." If it was a delusion, why did both see the identical beast? What caused them to see this animal under such ordinary and normal circumstances? Any explanation that anyone could give them would seem inadequate.

The story is related merely to point out that things occur for which our rational and simple explanations do not suffice. You can tell a man who has seen a ghost, night and day that he has *not* seen a ghost, but it won't change his way of thinking an iota. If you would be truly scientific about the affair you would analyze the apparently absurd happening with the same objectivity that a real scientist has instead of ridiculing it.

John and Lorraine spoke many times with so-called "rational" people never failing to mention this incident. Very rarely did they find anyone who gave it serious thought. Fortunately these days we know better. More and more people are beginning to realize that in mysticism there is often more truth than in "realty." The phrase so well known—"what man can imagine . . ."—is ladden with truth. Let the truth seekers speak—as did John and Lorraine.

* * *

THE BLACK SABBATH

IN OUR present day it is hard to realize the panic which at one time prevailed throughout European society because of the hundreds of hangings and burnings which were committed for the purpose of stamping out witchcraft. In those black days, it was understood that space was peopled with eight million demons, and it was indeed difficult for one to avoid being possessed. For instance, St. Gregory of Nice told the story of a nun that failed to recite her benedicite before she sat down to supper and consequently, she ate a demon that was concealed among the leaves of her lettuce.

Satan, being lord of the unclean host of demons, could appear in any form. During the reign of Philippe le Bel, he appeared before a monk in the shape of a dark man riding a tall black horse, next as a friar, then as an ass, and finally as a coach-wheel. Satan and his demons could easily assume the form of handsome youths with whom beautiful yound ladies would become enamoured. Children born of these unions could easily be recognized because of their constant howling and by their requiring five nurses to suckle them, yet never growing fat.

Periodically, Satan called a meetings of all the wizards, witches and demons. This meeting was called the Sabbath and according to some accounts, took place right after Friday nights. These lesser Sabbaths were held in various districts, but the grand Sabbath was held every year on the Brocken, and all the fiends of Christendom were represented.

Satan was known by the witches as "Asmodeus" and appeared to them in many shapes: sometimes

(Continued on page 168)

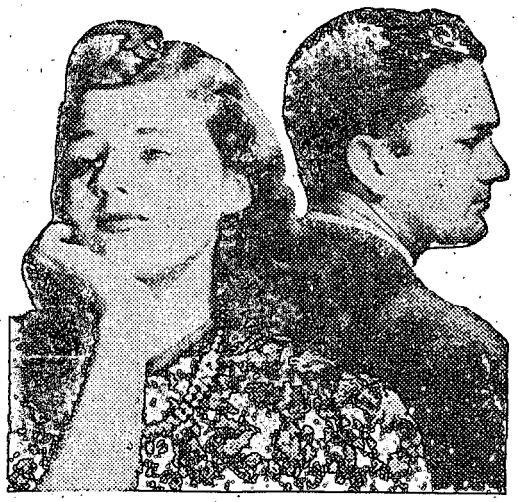
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BAD SKIN?

Stop Worrying About Pimples, Blackheads and Other Externally Caused Skin Troubles

Try Skin Doctor's Amazing Simple Directions and Be Thrilled with the Difference— Often So Much

CLEARER IN JUST ONE SHORT WEEK



SQUEEZING pimples or blackheads to get rid of them is a nasty, messy business—but that isn't the worst of it. Because doing so may also be injurious and leave your skin with unsightly, embarrassing blemishes. There is, now, a much easier, safer, cleaner way to help you rid your face of ugly, offensive, externally caused skin troubles. You merely follow a doctor's simple directions.

Good-Looking Skin Is Not for Women Only

You—yes, you—can have the same healthy, normal complexion free from externally caused skin troubles simply by giving your skin the special care that handsome screen stars give theirs. There's almost nothing to it—it is just about as easy as washing your face. *The whole secret consists of washing your face in a way that thoroughly cleanses the pores of every last speck of dirt and grime*—something that ordinary cleansing may not do. In fact, examination after examination shows that, usually, it is not a case of "bad skin" so much as a case of incomplete or faulty cleansing. What you should use is a highly concentrated soap like Viderm Skin Cleanser which penetrates the pores and acts as an antiseptic. When followed by a quick application of Viderm Medicated Skin Cream, specks of irritating dirt and grime are quickly washed out; they dissolve and disappear, leaving your skin clean, clear and free of the specks that often bring out pimples, blackheads and other externally-caused skin troubles.

DON'T DO THIS!

Don't murder your skin by squeezing it. Skin is delicate. When you break it, you leave yourself wide open to miseries. It's far easier, far safer, to let the Double Viderm treatment help you enjoy a handsome, clear and blemish-free complexion.

It's Foolish to Take Bad Skin for Granted

It doesn't pay to risk marred skin, blotches, blemishes. Your very success in business, love and social life may depend upon your looks. *Handsomeness and a good appearance usually start with the condition of your skin.* Nobody likes a skin that looks unhealthy, unclean, abused, and marked with blackheads or pimples. WOMEN ARE ATTRACTED TO MEN WHO HAVE SMOOTH, CLEAR, ROBUST-LOOKING SKIN. Business executives don't choose men who have a poor-looking complexion. Don't take chances with your success in life when this inexpensive Viderm formula may help you.

Don't murder your skin! Here's all you have to do to keep it smooth and clear. Use Viderm Skin Cleanser when you wash your face. Rub the rich lather of this highly-concentrated soap on your face for just a few seconds and then rinse it off. Then apply a little Viderm Medicated Skin Cream and that's all there is to it. Viderm Medicated Skin Cream quickly disappears, leaving your skin nice and smooth. This simple treatment, used after shaving, helps heal tiny nicks and cuts, relieves razor-burn and smarting, besides conditioning your skin.

Give Your Face This Treat for 7 Days

Stop worrying and being embarrassed over what may happen to your skin. Just send for your Viderm Double Treatment this minute, and be confident that you will keep a smooth and clear complexion. Follow the simple directions, written by a doctor, that you will get with your Viderm Double Treatment; then look in your mirror and listen to your friends admire your smooth, clear skin—the kind that women go for.

Just mail your name and address to The New York Skin Laboratory, 206 Division Street, Dept. 446, New York City 2, New York. By return mail you will receive both of the Viderm formulas, complete with full directions, and packed in a safety-sealed carton. On delivery, pay two dollars plus postage. If you wish, you can save the postage fee by mailing the two dollars with your letter. Then, if you aren't thrilled with results, your money will be cheerfully refunded. Remember that both of the formulas you use have been fully tested and proven, and are reliable for you. If they don't help you, your treatments cost you nothing. After you have received your Viderm, if you have any questions to ask concerning abused skin, just send them in.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(Continued from page 166)

only in the shape of a duck, and then again in the form of a black-eyed youth whose melanchonly aspect and embrace filled hearts with an eternal hatred for the holy Church. Satan was always at the grand black Sabbath and after all the witches kissed him and danced around him, he cloaked them in complete darkness, and every one took part in the most disgusting debauchery. Quite frequently Satan had the body of a man and the head of a goat. Between his horns a light would shine and his body would give off a ruddy glow and a sulphurous odor which intoxicated the members in the unholy rites. All sorts of imps and winged creatures flew about him, and in front of him was the seething cauldron which contained the boiling hell-brew for making poisonous potions. On each yearly occasion, the devil himself appointed a Queen of the Sabbath, whom he crowned and gave to her the privilege of sitting on his right, and a lesser favorite a seat on his left.

ACCORDING to a treatise on witches published in London in 1673, each witch is supposed to have a spirit or an imp which attends to him, assists him in any way they are commanded. These imps which are assigned to them, help them to be ready to attend all solemn occasions, and help to separate them from all other creatures so as not to be seen by any. When night comes on, the witches anoint themselves with oil, after stripping off their clothing, and they are carried out of their homes through the doors or chimneys and mounted on their imps, which may be in the form of a goat, sheep, or even a dragon. In this manner they are taken to their meeting place, where all the other witches soon arrive on their imps. The commuters service must have been fine for some of the witches lived hundreds of miles from the meeting place.

As soon as they arrive, they pay homage to the Devil, proclaiming him their Lord and rendering him all honor. After this solemn ceremony they sit down to a table laden with just everything they would want to gratify their witchy appetites. Any delicacy would be brought in the twinkling of an eye by the spirits attending the tables. The enjoyment of their meal is enriched with dinner music. Sometimes the very devil plays the flute. After the feast the tables are removed and there is dancing. But certainly an unusual dance, for the participants twine themselves back to back, and link their arms together, and raise each other from the ground and shake their heads, and turn themselves as though they were mad. After all this merriment, the lights are put out and before the sleeping Venus awakens, each witch mounts his imp and returns to his dwelling place.

At some of the more solemn assemblies, it was recorded that Satan called on each one to tell of what wickedness he had committed, and the one that had done the very worst things was honoured with a general applause. The ones that had done no evil, were beaten.

There was a very special recipe for the ointment with which the witches smeared themselves in order to be transported to the Sabbath: This one being taken from Reginald Scott's "Discovery of Witchcraft."

"The fat of young children, and seeth it with the water in a brazen vessell, reserving the thickest of that which remaineth boiled in the bottome, which they lay up and keep, until occasion serveth to use it. They put hereunto Eleoselinum, Aconitum, Frondes populeas, and Soote."

This is another recipe taken from his book: "Sium, acarum vulgare, pentaphyllon, the blood of a flitter mouse, solanum somniferum and oleum. They stamp these all together, and then they rub all parts of the bodies exceedinglie, till they look red, and be very hot, so that the pores may be opened and their flesh soluble and loose. They join herewithall either fat, or oil in stead thereof, and the force of the ointment maie the rather pearse inwardly, and so be more effectuall, and by this means, on a moonlight night, they seem to be carried in the aire." According to C. W. Leadbeater, certain ointments rubbed into the body will help the astral entity to leave the physical body in full consciousness.

* * *

A KINGDOM OR YOUR WIFE

PERHAPS every mother looks down at her young son and wonders proudly if he will ever be president, but does she ever stop to think that he might grow up to be a king and sit on a royal throne and be addressed as "Your Majesty!" Well could this be for many common American boys have done it. Some have fought for their kingdom, others have become king by shipwreck, some by romantic ideas, and some by using their wits. But very few of them have liked their kingship because of the lack of privacy and too much "queen trouble."

One young American, a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy, had the Kingdom of Samoa granted to him by the Samoans and the United States, and England, and Germany. But he rejected the offer because the girl in his life did not wish to become queen, of Samoa at least. His name was Lieutenant Charles Ripley, and when his ship came to port in Samoa, he thought it was the proper thing to do to pay his respects to King Malietoa. The king was very much pleased with his guest and after appraising him, stepped down from his throne and announced that he intended to adopt him as a son. Although his affection played some part in his decision, there was an historical reason. The young officer's great grandfather had also been a sailor who was shipwrecked in Samoa. To make the incident more pleasant, he married a Samoan princess, and had children. The king was a descendant, and in a way related to Lieutenant Rip-

(Continued on page 170)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Do Unseen Powers Direct Our Lives?

ARE the tales of strange human powers false? Can the mysterious feats performed by the mystics of the Orient be explained away as only illusions? Is there an intangible bond with the universe beyond which draws mankind on? Does a mighty Cosmic intelligence from the reaches of space ebb and flow through the deep recesses of the mind, forming a river of wisdom which can carry men and women to the heights of personal achievement?

Have You Had These Experiences?

. . . . . that unmistakable feeling that you have taken the wrong course of action, that you have violated some inner, unexpressed, better judgment. The sudden realization that the silent whisperings of self are cautioning you to keep your own counsel—not to speak words on the tip of your tongue in the presence of another. That something which pushes you forward when you hesitate, or restrains you when you are apt to make a wrong move.

These urges are the subtle *influence* which when understood and directed has made thousands of men and women masters of their lives. There IS a source of intelligence within you as natural as your senses of sight and hearing, and more dependable, which you are NOT using now! Challenge this statement! Dare the Rosicrucians to reveal the functions of this Cosmic mind and its great possibilities to you.

Let This Free Book Explain

Take this infinite power into your partnership. You can use it in a rational and practical way without interference with your religious beliefs or personal affairs. The Rosicrucians, a world-wide philosophical movement, *invite* you to use the coupon below, now, today, and obtain a free copy of the fascinating book, "The Mastery of Life," which explains further.

USE THIS COUPON

Scribe J. M. M.
The Rosicrucians, AMORC, San Jose, California.

I am sincerely interested in knowing more about this unseen, vital power which can be used in acquiring the fullness and happiness of life. Please send me, without cost, the book, "The Mastery of Life," which tells how to receive this information.

Name.....

Address.....

The ROSICRUCIANS
(AMORC)

(The Rosicrucians are NOT a religious organization.)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(Continued from page 168)

ley. The young officer was not too enthused over the idea, but not wanting to hurt the king's feelings, and also the fact that there were international complications in the Pacific, and not wanting to lose Samoa's good will, he accepted the honor. He went through all the ceremonies of feasting and dancing and adoption, then sailed away recalling his adoption only as a curious incident.

A few years past and the king died, leaving quite a few people fighting over the right to the throne. The U. S., Britain and Germany were the three military powers, and were in a neighborly frame of mind and they sent emissaries to Samoa to help them decide which contestant had the most valid right to the throne. They all decided that the rightful heir was the king's adopted son. Ripley, at that time had retired from the navy and was living in Colorado, and he was about to be married. You can well imagine his surprise when he received this letter covered with government seals and red tape, telling him that he had been appointed King of Samoa, and instructing him to take over his duties immediately. He thought it would be a lot of fun, but most important it would be profitable. But he had made a mistake of entertaining his intended wife with stories of the quaint customs of Samoa, especially the royal rights of kings concerning Samoan beauties. His letter had specified that he might bring an imported queen, but she refused to go with him, and within a day, his resignation was in the mail. Ripley's reign was undoubtedly the shortest one in history.

IN 1825, a whaling ship put into port in the Aukland province of New Zealand for fresh food. A young American carpenter aboard was giving the native maidens an appraisal, when the prettiest and proudest of the lot seemed to return his glances. The captain warned him of dire consequences if he had anything to do with this particular girl for she was the daughter of the famous King Caromandel. The young sailor refused the advice and gathered his carpentry tools and deserted ship. After the ship had left port, he presented himself to His Majesty who took a liking to him from the start. The king had all the power and the young American had progressive ideas. And then there was the beautiful princess with sultry eyes to consider. The king liked the sailor so much that he let him marry his daughter. He succeeded his father-in-law to the throne and set up trading posts all over the surrounding territory. He was the economic as well as political ruler of the Maioris. After years over prosperity and overextended business, the depression came. He needed more capital, so he came to the United States. Instead of asking for a government loan, he set out to find gold by his own hand. He went prospecting in the mountains of California, and was never heard from again. His sultry-eyed queen wept, and for a century, his American heirs kept themselves poor trying to collect their 4 million dollar claim.

There was an Irish-American ruler, "King David O.K." who reigned over the island of Yap. He disappeared in the ocean and left two wives to fight over his legacy. One wife was in Savannah, Ga. and the other on the Pacific island. It was in 1871 that he left his wife and daughter and set out for China where he intended to get rich quick. He was shipwrecked in the Carolines and landed on the Island of Yap.

While he was waiting to be rescued, he discovered that the natives were having governmental trouble due to property rights, and there were many fights. The American volunteered to make laws for them that would correct these things. They were so impressed by him that they made the young American their ruler. They gave him a partnership in all their business and property, which he told them was much simpler than taxation. His royal trapping all bore the signature "O.K." which stood for his name, O'Keefe. Other islands voluntarily came under his rule and for twenty-five years he enjoyed a prosperous reign, and all was peaceful, except for "queen trouble." All these years he had been sending large sums of money to his wife in Savannah along with unkept promises to return. Finally she decided to come to the island to see for herself just what was keeping him so long. He was forced to write to her and enumerate the reasons why she should not visit him. He had to tell her, that for political reasons it was necessary for him to marry the princess, daughter of a powerful chieftain, and to raise a large family of royal heirs. Naturally, his American wife was not too nice about the whole thing, and the queen and powerful father couldn't understand why he didn't get rid of her by royal edict. The correspondence was getting out of hand, and finally "King David O.K." and his two oldest sons sailed for the U. S. in a royal schooner, to explain to the American wife that the native princess had jumped her claim to matrimonial rights. But the schooner was lost at sea, and all three were drowned. The third son ascended the throne. Mrs. O'Keefe sent her lawyer to Yap to see where she stood in the situation. He came back with the news that his million dollar fortune was all willed to his queen and their children. But the fact that burned her up most of all was that the island widow said that she, Mrs. O'Keefe, was just a morganatic widow.

CARL HAFFKE was in the navy and served on Dewey's flagship at Manila Bay. After the war he stayed on in the Philippines as a court stenographer. He saved an important member of the Ilocano tribe from being tricked by the law, and after cholera killed off all the royal family of the tribe, the chieftains asked Haffke to become their king. He accepted the job as a good business deal, and levied a dollar head tax on

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the 100,000 members to be invested in farm machinery. Everything was going fine financially, but King Carlos I was very unhappy. He was longing for the girl at home. So his councillors suggested that he take a trip back to the U. S. and bring back an American queen. So the king set out to do just that, but his American girl could not be talked into becoming a queen, so he renounced his crown and became just plain Mr. Carl Haffke from Nebraska.

Practically the same thing happened when a young Purdue University graduate, representing a British phosphate company in the Christmas islands, became their king. The young man accepted the honor because it would make his business dealings much more simple. So as their king, he isssued laws and proclamations, and all went well till he had to visit England on business and there he fell in love with an English girl who said that he must choose between her and the throne. So once again an American tossed off his crown for his sweetheart.

* * *

DEAD WARRIOR HONORS

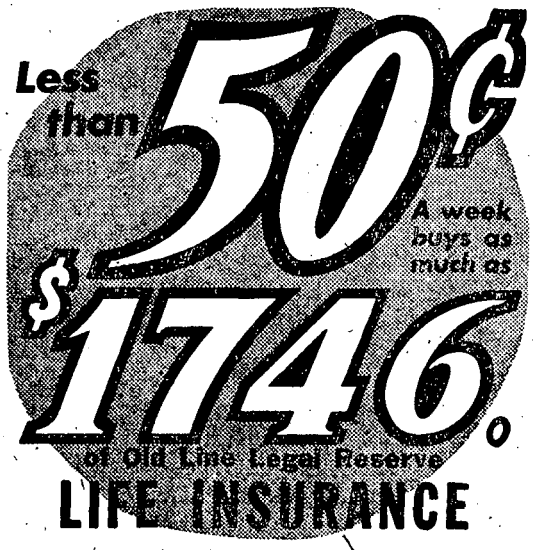
THE Greeks, at one time, established games to keep alive the memory and to appease the spirits of men who had perished on the field of battle. When the Carthaginians and Tyrrhennians had beaten the Phocaeans in a sea fight, they landed their prisoners near Agylla in Etruria and stoned them all to death. After that, whenever the people of Agylla or their cattle or sheep passed the scene of the massacre, they were stricken by strange maladies which distorted their bodies and made them unable to walk. So they asked their Delphic oracle what to do about it and he told them that they would have to offer great sacrifices to the dead Phocaeans and have equestrian and athletic games in their honor to appease the angry ghosts of the men that had been stoned to death there. So sacrifices were offered to them every year with great solemnity. The chief magistrate of Plataea washed all their tombstones and anointed them with scented oil. Then he slaughtered a bull over a burning pyre and called upon the dead warriors to come to the banquet and have some of the blood. Then he would fill a bowl with wine and drink to the men who had fallen for the freedom of Greece.

* * *

GATHERING DEW

DEW gathered early in the morning on the first day of May was believed by the early Scots to have the qualities to preserve the skin from wrinkles and freckles, and give it the glow of youth. Collecting dew on that morning also gave that person the power of witchcraft, and protection against the evil eye. To be seen in a field on May Day would mean that you would always be feared as a witch or a wizard.

* * *



YOU ACTUALLY PAY only *$2.00 a month at all ages for the amounts shown below.

*THIS IS HALF THE PERMANENT RATE WHICH TAKES EFFECT THE 6TH YEAR.

AT AGE	FOR MONTHLY PREMIUM OF	YOU GET A POLICY FOR
20	$2.00	$1746.
25	2.00	1582.
30	2.00	1408.
35	2.00	1250.
40	2.00	1086.

Proportionate amounts at all other ages, 15-55. Mail coupon now for full facts and amounts at your age.

Here is a unique plan that lets you budget your Life Insurance like rent. The rate is the same no matter what your age! The amounts vary but, even at 40 you can get $1086 of this Solid, Old Line, Legal Reserve Life Insurance protection!
And not only that—but your policy will be

FULLY PAID-UP IN 30 YEARS

with no more premiums to pay, yet your insurance continues in force the rest of your life.

POSTAL LIFE operating under the rigid New York State Insurance laws has sold Life Insurance by mail and over the counter for 43 years and has satified policyholders everywhere. Over $14,000,000 in assets! More than $60,000,000 paid out in benefits!

Postal Policies are participating! Mail Coupon today!

Get the FACTS by mail!

Postal Life Insurance Company
511 Fifth Avenue, Dept. D—787
New York 17, N. Y.

Mail me complete information about your new "$2.00-per-month", 30-payment Modified 5 Whole Life Policy at my age.

NAME .....
OCCUPATION .....
DATE OF BIRTH .....
ADDRESS .....
Include Postal Zone, if any.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

READER'S PAGE

A REQUEST FROM ENGLAND

Sirs:

I am a young Englishman. I have ransacked this country in an effort to locate copies of the five American magazines—now unfortunately defunct—entitled: "Dime Mystery," "Horror Stories," "Terror Tales," "Eerie Tales," and "Octopus."

I have not been able to find any of these magazines over here. I wonder if any of your readers would be so very kind as to send me some—if they have any? I am afraid our government will not permit us to send money to America, so if any readers are prepared to send me some they will have to be in the nature of a gift. The United States is pouring so much aid into unhappy, hungry Europe that one hardly likes to ask her sons for copies of magazines yet. But reading one's favorite literature—as all you fantasy fans know—does assist one to forget the bleakness and despair of life in London, today.

I would be very much obliged if you could find room for this letter in your excellent publication. My cousin has lived in your country for many years, and he sends me many of your magazines with gratifying regularity. May I hope that some of you interested fantasy readers will be able to help me in a similar way?

Eric Lumer,
% BM/FRVV
London, W.C. 1, England.

We are very happy to present your request to the readers of FA, Eric, and knowing our readers we feel certain that they will be only too glad to look up some of the magazines you would like to read and send them to you. Right, gang?...Ed.

AN EXCELLENT ISSUE

Sirs:

As a constant reader of FA I am writing to compliment you on the excellent March issue I have just finished reading.

"The Court Of Kublai Khan" set a new standard for assuming that science-fiction readers are an intelligent, educated group. I enjoyed it thoroughly, then secretly re-read Coleridge once again. . . .

"Spirit Of The Keys" and "The Thin Woman" were absorbing because of the new twists given their well-worn plots.

But best of all, I liked "Zero A.D." It was the type of story that starts you off fighting it as just *too* fantastic and winds up by implanting a permanent doubt in your mind. In this connection let me quote you Abraham Lincoln: "I don't know who my grandfather was; I am much more concerned to know what his grandson will be."

Thelma F. Abell,
671 West 162nd St.,
New York 32, N. Y.

We're glad to hear that you liked "Zero A.D." so well, Thelma, and as you say, the story does give one pause to wonder. And along these lines how about a quote from Shakespeare: "We are such stuff as dreams are made on, and our little lives are rounded with a sleep."....Ed.

COULDN'T WAIT TO WRITE!

Sirs:

FA is one of my favorite reading pleasures. Every time I read an issue I mean to write you, but this is the first time I ever really did. In the past few months I particularly enjoyed these stories: "Witch Of The Andes," "High Ears," "Mr. Beller and the Winged Horse," "Slaves of the Worm" (which was about the best story I ever read in FA), "Twice To Die," and "They Buried Her Body." These stories stand out.

In the March issue "Spirit of the Keys," "The Thin Woman," and "Zero A.D." were all good—especially "Zero A.D." I've started to read "The Court of Kublai Khan," and oh, brother—does it look good! Couldn't even wait to finish reading it before writing to you . . .

Evie Culley,
Rural Rt. 2,
Sandpoint, Idaho.

Write to us again, Evie, now that you've finished reading "Kublai Khan."....Ed.

WITH APOLOGY TO GEIER . . .

Sirs:

This is the first letter I have ever written to any editor, so I'm not sure I'm walking on safe ground. Since I started reading FA and AS two years ago, I have constantly praised them to my friends. This praise has often led to long discussions with my friends—especially on Dick Shaver. His stuff on paper sounds plausible enough, but ideas on paper and concrete proof are two different things. I wish, as possibly thousands of other people do too, that I could correspond with Mr. Shaver personally. Possibly this would clear up a lot of the questions in my mind.

To continue, I have just finished the March issue of FA and (it pains me to say this) I was very disappointed in the entire issue. Let me explain in some detail:

"The Court of Kublai Khan"—perfectly lovely

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

—dribble, that is.

"Make Yourself A Wish"—I wish it had never been written. Just wasted space.

"Spirit of the Keys"—that's Geier? Check that signature again. Obviously a forgery.

"Astral Rhythm"—no rhythm there. Just discord, plain and fancy.

"The Thin Woman"—*huh?!*

"Zero A.D."—that's all, brother, just ZERO!

And in conclusion may I say—I don't want it, you can have it, it stinks too much for me. . . . Aw, come on, fellows, you can do so much better than that!

Well, now that I've heaved my brickbats, here's an orchid or two. The first to Virgil Finlay for his beautiful illustrations. Next, Don Wilcox and William P. McGivern for their fine stories in the January issue. Lots of orchids to Bob Jones for his covers.

Horror of horrors—egad, what ghastly thing have I done? I have mixed up my stories on the March issue and sold dear old Chester Geier down the river! My sincerest and deepest apology to you, Chet. Your "Spirit of the Keys" was *very* good.

When do we get a new "Toffee" story? Those yarns are good, but too short.

If this letter is lucky enough, after all I've said, to reach the reader's page, I would like to correspond with any stf fans around my ripe old age of twenty-two. Especially femme-pen-pals.

D. R. "Duff" Davis,
251 Pierce St.,
San Francisco, Cal.

O.K. Duff, you made the grade—even if you didn't like the March issue so well . . . but as we've often said, we want all the kicks you readers can send us. And just because you've got a gripe it doesn't mean you can't make the Reader's Page—quite to the contrary—this is your department, you can praise FA to high heaven, or scream it to low—well, you know what we mean. . . .

As to writing to Dick Shaver, we're sure he'd be glad to hear from you. His address is: Box 74, R.D. 2, Lily Lake, McHenry, Ill.

Chet Geier says to tell you, "Apology accepted, and if you want to find out more about the Shaver Mystery, write to me and join the Shaver Mystery Club—and all the rest of you FA fans."

There'll be a new "Toffee" story coming up soon. Watch for it.....Ed.

INFORMATION WANTED

Sirs:

In the January issue of FA you had a very interesting letter which caught the eye of a group of us young people—my husband, a few close friends, and myself. It was an interesting letter but does sound a bit too fantastic to be true. The letter was writen by Darrell Oaks. We would like an answer to a few questions:

1. How could she talk and still not breathe?
2. What was the illness she had?
3. How could the doctor complete a thorough

DON'T BE OLD-FASHIONED
1948's SEX
DISCOVERIES NOW REVEALED

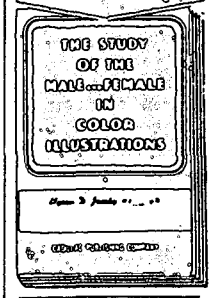
WRITTEN IN EVERYDAY STRAIGHT-FROM-THE-SHOULDER LANGUAGE

THE MODERN SEX MANUAL
ILLUSTRATED

FACTS FOUND IN NO OTHER BOOK!

Of all the contributions made by scientists and doctors in recent years... THE LATEST VITAL FACTS ON MARRIAGE RELATIONS have been least benefited by. Here at last is the newest authoritative book published in many years . . . just off the press. Few people realize how old-fashioned their false notions, fears, etc., are until they have read these most CURRENT, ENLIGHTENING INSTRUCTIONS developed in recent years by our best-known authorities.

FREE



FREE BOOK OF MANY HELPFUL ILLUSTRATIONS

You receive an absolutely free book "The Study of the Male and Female in Color Pictures" with your order of "The Modern Sex Manual." This free book (now selling for $1) contains many illustrations in brilliant color and simple explanations giving man and woman a better understanding between them. An appropriate gift in perfecting today's marriage harmony. Limited copies — Mail Coupon Now!

HUNDREDS OF TODAY'S INTIMATE PROBLEMS ANSWERED

This book is written in a new informal Questions and Answers style in everyday STRAIGHT FROM THE SHOULDER LANGUAGE—EASILY UNDERSTOOD . . . the newest discoveries and remedies. Practically every abnormal case may now be cured. THE MANY ILLUSTRATIONS further help you master the complexities of marriage relations.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Written by a doctor who has treated thousands of cases and thus avoided divorces, quarrels, etc. This modern guide is for the NEWLYWEDS, who SHOULD BE SURE of themselves from the start, for established couples who find various problems develop, and FOR MIDDLE AGED AND OLDER COUPLES WHO MUST KNOW what should be done in their later years. The author says: "... many important advances have been made in sexology ... the most frequent asked questions have been given consideration." This turning point in your marriage is yours for only $1.98 ($5.00 value). You would gladly pay much more than $1.98 for JUST ONE SOLUTION among the hundreds in this book. Order now—delay is lost satisfaction.

PARTIAL CONTENTS

- Matching Sex compatibility
- "Safe period" charts
- Too much or too little intercourse controlled
- More sex satisfaction for women, men
- Sex faults of husbands and wives
- Cause and cure for women's frigidity and man's impotency
- Today's cures for abnormal cases
- Ability to have children
- Vitamin E cure for sterility

READ BOTH BOOKS WITHOUT BUYING

CADILLAC PUBLISHING CO., INC., Dept. M-868
220 Fifth Ave., N. Y. C. 1

Send me "THE MODERN SEX MANUAL" in plain wrapper marked "personal" with FREE GIFT ($6.00 VALUE COMPLETE). I will pay postman $1.98 plus postage on delivery. If not satisfied within 5 days, I can return books and money will be refunded. I am over 21.

NAME .....
ADDRESS .....
CITY ..... STATE .....

Canada or foreign no C.O.D. Send $2.50.
☐ Check herewith if you desire to save delivery costs, enclosing only $1.98 with coupon.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

For the Best in Reading Pleasure

Get Your Copies of

MAMMOTH WESTERN, AMAZING STORIES, FANTASTIC ADVENTURES

For up-to-the-minute, action-packed reading in science-fiction, fantasy, and western stories, you'll find that the perfect answer is:

Every Month

The Ziff-Davis Fiction Group

Free for Asthma

If you suffer with attacks of Asthma and choke and gasp for breath, if restful sleep is difficult because of the struggle to breathe, don't fail to send at once to the Frontier Asthma Company for a FREE trial of the FRONTIER ASTHMA MEDICINE, a preparation for temporary symptomatic relief of paroxysms of Bronchial Asthma. No matter where you live or whether you have faith in any medicine under the sun, send today for this free trial. It will cost you nothing. Caution! Use only as directed. Address

Frontier Asthma Co. 868-B Frontier Bldg.
462 Niagara St. Buffalo 1, N. Y.

LAW...

STUDY AT HOME Legally trained men win higher positions and bigger success in business and public life. Greater opportunities now than ever before. More Ability: More Prestige: More Money We guide you step by step. You can train at home during spare time. Degree of LL.B. We furnish all text material, including 14-volume Law Library. Low cost, easy terms. Get our valuable 48-page "Law Training for Leadership" and "Evidence" books FREE. Send NOW. G. I. APPROVED.
LASALLE EXTENSION UNIVERSITY, 417 South Dearborn Street
A Correspondence Institution Dept. L-709 Chicago 5, Ill.

$1,200.00 PAID YEARLY TO NEW SONGWRITERS

Send us your Songs and Song Poems. Hollywood composers write melody WITHOUT CHARGE. Lead Sheets and Records furnished. Send song material TODAY for FREE EXAMINATION. Write for details.
CINEMA SONG CO., Dept. ZD-7
Box 670, Beverly Hills, Calif.

Learn BAKING At Home

Baking is one of America's high industries in wages. Nearly depression-proof. Thorough basic home course lays sound foundation. If you have aptitude, write for FREE BOOKLET, "Opportunities in Commercial Baking."
National Baking School, 1315 Mich. Ave., Dept. 158-A, Chicago 5

examination if she was not in a hospital where they have the necessary equipment to detect a heartbeat?

4. How could she talk directly to her sister, when a dead person's eyes are dilated so that they cannot see properly?

5. What did the sister die of?

6. What was von Cosel's experiment?

We would greatly appreciate it if you would be able to supply answers to these questions.

Mrs. K. V. McKean,
4724½ N.E. Cully Rd.,
Portland, Oregon.

As to us supplying answers to Mr. Oaks' letter, well, frankly, we don't know anything more about the case he mentioned than you do. We think the letter speaks for itself, you either have to accept it as being true, or you don't. Apparently it was only Mr. Oaks' relating of an incident that he knew had occurred. We have received no further word on the matter, but if anyone has any information to offer, we would certainly be glad to relay it to all of our readers. As to Karl Tanzler von Cosel, his experiment had to do with a scientific attempt at bringing life back to a body after death. The full account of his experiment was given in his true story, "The Secret Of Elena's Tomb" published in our September issue last year. We suggest you read the story..... .....Ed.

HIT US WITH A DAISY!

Sirs:

Score another hit with me on the March issue of FA! I am now a confirmed reader of FA and AS—I might say, an addict. I also don't mind saying that this type of reading requires for its audience minds that are unique, so to speak, in that they are searching for truth, not just seeking to narcotize themselves with present pleasures. For those who say it is just escapism, well, I dare them to read some of the stories and still call it that! I think it takes a unique type of imagination to write these tales too. Not just anybody can do it. I hereby pin a rose on each one of the writers—even the poorest, if there is such a one, which I doubt—for their agile imagination and sometimes fertile insight into the realms of what might be. . . .

Now for the stories in the March issue. "The Court of Kublai Khan" was highly entertaining, even if it isn't my idea of the setting for Coleridge's exquisite poem. Bits of wisdom and entertaining scientific premises are scattered throughout the story as thick as rice at a wedding. However, to me, the little Chinamen running around with swords seemed a trifle incongruous, and I prefer to think of Xanadu differently.

"Astral Rhythm" by the new writer, Bernie Kamins, was swell! Shaver's "Thin Woman"—brr! It sticks; you can't get rid of it. He writes real purty too. Geier's "Spirit of the Keys"—wow! What a plot! Rife through all mythology and folk-lore is the idea that "things" have souls, and this story carries the idea to the nth degree.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cute. (I don't say they do have souls or they don't —but I think this typewriter of mine was an ugly old hag until I praised and petted her—now she has improved in looks and temperament and actually likes me! . . .)

"Make Yourself A Wish" by Geoff St. Reynard was a delightful fantasy.

And here's a bouquet for all the good little articles and the art-work—as always, an extra-special orchid for Finlay's superb drawings.

Oh, Yes, Lee Francis' "Zero A.D." I put off commenting on this because it bothers me. A tender brain hadn't better brood about this too much. A blossom from the night-blooming Cereus for this tale. But I think our delusions are mostly home-made.

And for you, ye eds, a daisy apiece. I have run out of flowers. And I didn't intend to make this such a long letter, but guess I got kind of carried away. . . .

Dwight Augustine,
P.O. Box 545,
Lima, Ohio.

We'll take that daisy, Dwight, and plant it in our editorial garden.....Ed.

DYED IN THE MUSH FEN

Sirs:

Re: Editor's query Reader's Page March FA—"But how about the rest of you fans—what do you think?"

Answer: The protest proves a true dyed in the wool science-fiction-fantasy fan. Readers of all ages, if mentally advanced, will agree. Adolescent mush does not belong in our magazines. Those who crave it can buy True Romances at any newsstand.

Eva Firestone,
Upton, Wyoming.

We're in the middle on this one, so read what follows. .....Ed.

Sirs:

In reading the Reader's Page of the March FA a letter from a fan named Linda Blake caught my attention. She complained that too much love is creeping into FA. I think that to leave love or sex out of a magazine many men read—and women too—would be like leaving gasoline out of a car because you did not like the odor of it. I think my point is clear.

This is the first time I have written you, so I would like to mention a few stories I thought were tops in FA.

1. "Forever Is Too Long." This would be tops over any story in FA.

2. "Warrior Of The Dawn." More stories of this type, please.

3. "Secret of Elena's Tomb." A very good story.

I would like to see another novel by Geier in FA. Say something that would rival A. Merritt's "The Ship of Ishtar."

Walter K. Schwartz,
1031 W. Virginia St.,
Evansville, Ind.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LAW

STUDY AT HOME for Personal Success and LARGER EARNINGS. 39 years' expert instruction—over 108,000 students enrolled. LL.B. Degree awarded. All text material furnished. Easy payment plan. Send for FREE BOOK—"Law and Executive Guidance"—NOW.

AMERICAN EXTENSION SCHOOL OF LAW
Dept. 90-R 646 N. Michigan Ave. Chicago 11, Ill.

ILLUSTRATED COMIC BOOKLETS
THE KIND MEN LIKE!
(VEST POCKET SIZE)
They are loaded with rare cartoons. Full of Fun and Humor.
20 DIFFERENT booklets sent prepaid for $1 in plain wrapper. Sorry . . . no C.O.D.'s.
GRAYKO Dept. 1275, Box 520, G.P.O., N.Y.C.

BE A DETECTIVE
WORK HOME or TRAVEL. Experience unnecessary.
DETECTIVE Particulars FREE Write to
GEO. Z. D. WAGNER, 125 W. 86th St., N. Y.

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

Song Poems

POEMS Wanted. Free examination. Send poems to J. Chas. McNeil, Master of Music. 510 ZD South Alexandria Ave., Los Angeles 5, Calif.

POEMS wanted for musical setting. Send poem for immediate consideration.—Hamann Service, 612 Manhattan Building, Milwaukee, Wis.

Miscellaneous

WHAT do you want? Free counsel. Immanuel Science, Columbia City, Ind.

SELF-conscious? Shy? Nervous? Send for Dericot's latest course. It is guaranteed to help you. Only $1.00. Dericot, 2801 France S., Minneapolis, Minn.

WORRIED? Let us advise you. Fee $5. Personal Counselling Service, 312A W. Wesley, Jackson, Michigan.

TELEVISION on your telephone, Amazing! Complete. Guaranteed $1. Half & Half. Box 29Z, New York 24, N. Y.

MAGAZINES (back dated)—foreign, domestic, arts. Books, booklets, subscriptions, pin-up, etc. Catalog 10c (refundable). Cicerone's Center, 863 First Ave., New York 17, N. Y.

SCIENTIFICTION weird, fantastic; books, magazines. Werewolf Bookshop, 621A Maryland, Pittsburgh 6, Pa.

BOOKS—Magazines (Back Dated). Send dime for list. Clark's, 302 N. Junction, Detroit, Mich.

"84 CARD Tricks." 25c! Free "Moneymaking Opportunities!" Hirsch, Spring Valley 7, N. Y.

MEN! Large size shoes, large size sox! We specialize in large sizes 10 to 16, widths AA-EEE. Oxfords, Hitops, Work shoes. Guaranteed extra quality. Free Catalog. Kingsize, 471 Brockton, Mass.

GENEROUS Cabinet Sample Placer Gold. Postpaid, $1.00. Box 83, Elk City, Idaho.

MAINTAIN a New York office address, for prestige and privacy in correspondence. Your mail received and forwarded promptly. Low rates. Confidential. Reliable. Free details. Arlington, 131-C West 42nd, New York 18, N. Y.

BOOK Swappin'. Send me four books plus $1. I'll mail you four others, similar condition. L. Broda, Dept. ZD, 823 Hunts Point Ave., New York 59, N. Y.

Your point is quite clear, Walt. As to Geier, he's working on a new novel now. To give you just a hint about it—it concerns the Arabian Nights and the adventures of one Sinbad—does that excite your curiosity? Well, it does ours, and we can hardly wait until Geier finishes it! . . . To get back to the love interest point, there's another comment on this in the following letter.....Ed.

Sirs:

Well, it's taken me a long time to get down to writing a letter to you, but here goes.

I am an *old timer* when it comes to *reading* your fine magazines, FA and AS. I started reading a way back when. . . . Sometimes I think the magazines are better today than they were some years back, but then I wonder if they could be better than they were in the beginning!

Shaver is o.k. I would like a personal letter from him. Also, might add that I would like to correspond with any fans who would care to write to me. I've got a lot of time on my hands right now, being a hospital patient, so anyone who writes will get a prompt answer from me.

Keep up the good art-work. The more cheesecake the better! And, oh yes, this love interest protest. Well, all I've got to say is, love is what makes the world go round. . . .

Melvin K. Dinge,
Eaton Building,
Missouri State Sanatorium,
Mt. Vernon, Mo.

Hurry up and get well, Melvin, and in the meantime, come on you fans, get those letters rolling to Missouri!.....Ed.

MORE OF THE SAME PLEASE!

Sirs:

I have just finished the March issue of FA. I want to say that I have never read a better issue thus far.

"The Court of Kublai Khan" by David V. Reed is a marvelous fantasy. I'd like to see more of Reed's work.

"Zero A.D." by Lee Francis is the most superb science-fiction story I have ever read. (I use double superlative, but that's how I have to describe it.)

"Astral Rhythm" by Bernie Kamins was a fine story. Good writing, good plot.

"The Thin Woman" by Dick Shaver was a good yarn but doesn't compare with "Slaves of the Worm."

"Make Yourself A Wish" by Geoff St. Reynard —a foxy story by a fox. Interesting ending.

"Spirit of the Keys" by Chet Geier—I liked the love interest in it and I don't sympathize with Linda Blake's letter. (A girl at that!)

An artistic cover by Jones. Let's have more issues like that one, please!

Bob Alloway,
744 Hunterdon St.,
Newark 8, N. J.

How's this issue, Bob?.....Ed.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A KINDRED SPIRIT

Sirs:

Once before I wrote you a fan letter. You published it. Brother, you certainly must have a circulation. Every other (so it seemed) of your female readers wrote me, denouncing me in no uncertain terms because of my feeble protest against the so-called love element in your stories.

This man's opinion of the March FA—fair.

"The Court of Kublai Khan"—wonderful plot, but indifferently written.

"Make Yourself A Wish"—not bad, nice ending.

"Spirit of the Keys"—very nice writing job to waste on a love story. . . .

"Astral Rhythm"—must have been a filler.

"The Thin Woman"—there's a lesson in it somewhere. . . .

"Zero A.D."—good story, disappointing ending.

Reader's Page—Linda Blake is one lady that seems to think there is too much love interest in your stories. A kindred spirit.

Please, no more "Toka" stories. They are terrible. I read nine stf magazines. Your magazine is my number two favorite.

Willard Shenkel,
Route No. 4,
Nampa, Idaho.

We're not surprised that you got a lot of mail, Willard. As a matter of fact, on a controversial subject like that we would have been surprised if you hadn't gotten mail! We certainly have received hundreds of letters, pro and con—and we must say that the majority have been pro—so it looks like love is here to stay. (Again we ask—what would we do without it? Anybody got a good substitute?) We are somewhat surprised to hear you call the "Toka" stories terrible. They have been very popular with our readers. And now we've got a real gripe to make to you: What do you mean only number two on your list! Padnah, them's fightin' words. . . . Anyway, we'll try hard to rate number one with you from now on. .....*Ed.*

DIDDLE—PADIDDLE—UMPADIDDLE

Sirs:

I wish to tell you what I thought of the stories, articles, features, and illustrations in the March FA. First, the stories:

"The Thin Woman" by Shaver. Shaver wrote a good story for once. Very good, almost a classic. Goes right next to "Pickman's Model" on my list of best weird stories.

"Zero A.D." by Lee Francis. This should have taken first place. Certainly the theme is intriguing, and I've always liked the "great discovery and the world is against me" type. But the story lacked something, perhaps good characterization. In writing, the first dimension is plot, which gives the story movement; the second is treatment, which gives the story probability; and the third is characterization, which gives it depth. Lee Francis' story, while full of the first two, is completely lacking in the third. There is therefore

What to Do for Pains of ARTHRITIS Try This Free

If you have never used "Rosse Tabs" for pains of arthritis, neuritis, rheumatism, we want you to try them at our risk. We will send you a full-size package from which you are to use 24 Tabs FREE. If not astonished at the palliative relief which you enjoy from your sufferings, return the package and you owe us nothing. We mean it: SEND NO MONEY. Just send name and address and we will rush your Tabs by return mail. ROSSE PRODUCTS CO., Dept. 255, 2708 Farwell Ave., Chicago 45, Ill.

ACCOUNTANT BECOME AN EXPERT

Executive Accountants and C. P. A's earn $3,000 to $10,000 a year. Thousands of firms need them. We train you thoroly at home in spare time for C. P. A's examinations or executive accounting positions. Previous experience unnecessary. Personal training under supervision of staff of C. P. A's. Placement counsel and help. Write for free book, "Accountancy, the Profession That Pays."

LASALLE Extension University, 417 So. Dearborn St. A Correspondence Institution Dept. H-708 Chicago 5, Ill.

MECHANICS • HOME STUDY

Step up your own skill with facts & figures of your trade. Audels Mechanics Guides contain Practical Inside Trade Information in handy form. Fully illustrated. Easy to Understand. Highly Endorsed. Check book you want for 7 days' Free Examination. Send no Money. Nothing to pay postman. ☐Carpentry $6 • ☐Auto $4 • ☐ Oil Burners $1 ☐Sheet Metal $1 • ☐Welding $1 • ☐Refrigeration $4 ☐Plumbing $6 • ☐Masonry $6 • ☐Painting $2 • ☐Radio $4 ☐Electricity $4 • ☐Mathematics $2 • ☐Steam Engineers $4 ☐Machinist $4 • ☐Blueprint $2 • ☐Diesel $2 • ☐Drawing $2. If satisfied you pay only $1 a month until price is paid.

AUDEL, Publishers, 49 W. 23 St., New York 10, N. Y.

"The Book They're Talking About" Contains over 300 illustrations, charts and notes

ART ANATOMY OF THE HUMAN FIGURE

For the amateur and professional artist and sculptor. Giving detailed study of every part of the body. Male and Female, Posed and in Action. Outside U.S.A. Send $1.25

$1.00

MAJOR BOOK CO., Dept. 72-F, LYNBROOK, NEW YORK

If an INVENTOR BELIEVES HE HAS AN INVENTION

a search of the most pertinent prior U. S. Patents should be made and a report obtained relative to its patentability. Write for further particulars as to patent protection and procedure and "Invention Record" form at once. No obligation.

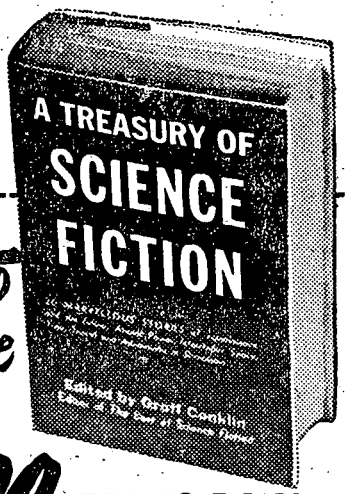
McMORROW, BERMAN & DAVIDSON
Registered Patent Attorneys
186-T Victor Building Washington 1, D. C.

WANTED PEOPLE WHO WANT TO MAKE BIG MONEY

For a good steady income all year around raise Angoras. No experience necessary. Just a few minutes daily and a few feet of backyard space. We furnish free instructions with markets for wool and young.

IOWA ANGORA ASSOCIATION
610 Marshall St. Paul 4, Minn.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



Yours to examine Free

FOR 10 DAYS

Examine it at home without obligation. Just mail the coupon below.

This MAMMOTH volume of 30 top science-fiction stories by the world's best science-fiction writers

● Complete in one giant book of 512 pages, 30 marvellous stories of Superscience and the Future—Atomic Power, Interstellar Space, Travel and Adventure in Dimension and Time. A TREASURY OF SCIENCE FICTION is as action-packed as the best detective fiction, and even more exciting. For these tales raise the curtain on the future being born today in the minds of our master scientists. Here, men travel at the speed of light, robots mingle with men in death struggles. Here is a world of unlimited atomic energy, the mystery of outer space, the great adventure of the future.

Just a few of the 30 amazing stories in this book:

THE NIGHTMARE *by Anderson & Walrop*
THE GREAT FOG *by H. F. Heard*
N DAY *by Philip Latham*
NO WOMAN BORN *by C. L. Moore*
WITH FLAMING SWORDS *by Cleve Cartmill*
JUGGERNAUT *by A. E. Van Vogt*
MIMSY WERE THE BOROGROVES *by Lewis Padgett*
WINGS ACROSS THE COSMOS *by Polton Cross*
RESCUE PARTY *by Arthur C. Clarke*

ACT QUICKLY, OFFER LIMITED. Full refund if you are not completely satisfied. MAIL THIS COUPON *NOW*.

CROWN PUBLISHERS, 419 Fourth Ave., New York 16

Please rush me.....copy(ies) of A TREASURY OF SCIENCE FICTION @ $3.00. I may return my order for a complete refund within 10 days.

☐ Check or M. O. enclosed (Post free) ☐ C. O. D. (Postage Extra)

Name.....

Address.....

City..... *Zone*... *State*.....z

nothing under the surface. Perhaps the reason is that the author had too many characters. It takes a real master to handle as many characters as we find in this story. So that's why I place it second.

"Make Yourself A Wish" by Geoff St. Reynard. A good surprise-ending short, but it lacked meat.

"The Court of Kublai Khan" by David V. Reed. Tired plot, well-written. The theme is so old it takes a master, a genius, to make it really interesting. Good, but confusing.

"Spirit of the Keys" by Chet Geier. Geier has never written a good story, but never a really bad one either.

"Astral Rhythm" by Bernie Kamins. Not bad for a newcomer.

All in all, a pretty good issue, not a single story below mediocre.

The cover is diddle, the Finlay is padiddle, the Tillotsons umpadiddle, and the rest of the ill are ill.

The articles as usual are fair, except for "Miniature God" which was fascinating.

Now for a few questions: I recently got a few old FA and AS from '41 to '43. Why did you discontinue the reprints? And don't say that your new stories are better than anything you could reprint. You know better than that. Also, did you publish the sequel to "Skeleton Men of Jupiter"? And when do we get more Burroughs?

Michael Wigodsky,
7744 Ridgeland Ave.,
Chicago 49, Ill.

Publishing reprints has never been a policy of Ziff-Davis, Mike, although we have reprinted a few stories during a space of years. Most readers would rather read new fiction, and here we feel the same way. And as to the new stories being any better than the old, well, in five or ten years from now, the stories of today will be old and you will probably be saying "Why can't we have some of the good old stories?" As to Burroughs and his sequels, well, Burroughs has been ill for some time and has not been writing too much. But we hope he'll get well soon and maybe then.....Ed.

PRAISE FOR MALCOLM SMITH

Sirs:

This is my first letter to you. I began reading FA not long ago and have become very interested in it. I will read it constantly from now on.

I am writing because of your March issue. "Zero A.D." rang the bell with me, and the skilled artistic hand of Malcolm Smith added to the story. I will be looking for Smith again. . . .

Christ Castanis,
623 S. 7th St.,
Columbus, Miss.

We're glad to welcome you into the fold, Christ, but from now on, let's hear from you regularly. And about Lee Francis, who wrote "Zero A.D." We think you'll be pleased to know that he's got a long novel coming up soon in FA. And it's a novel that will really ring the bell—we think! So watch for it—all you fans!.....Ed.

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

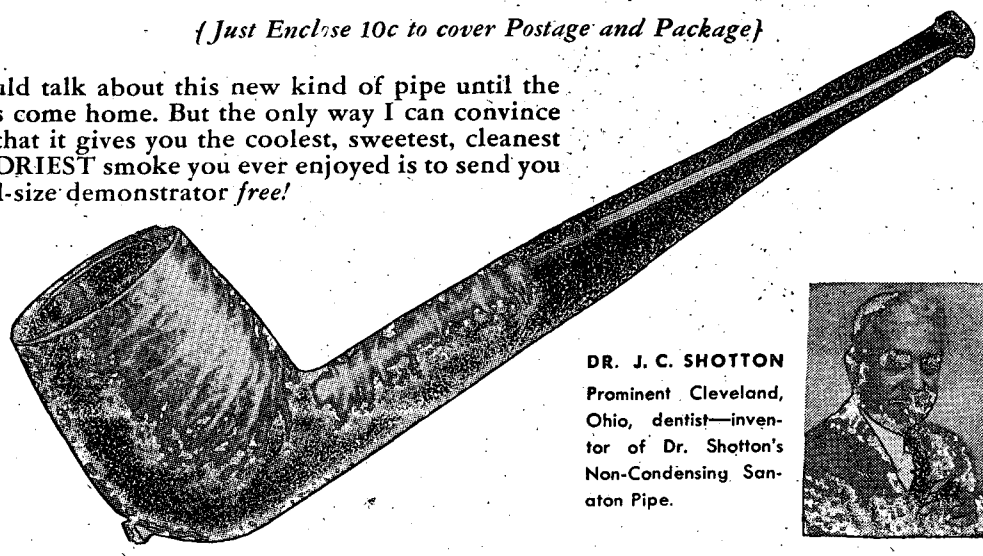
PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

FREE TO PIPE SMOKERS

THIS NON-CONDENSING SANATON "DEMONSTRATOR" PIPE

(Just Enclose 10c to cover Postage and Package)

I could talk about this new kind of pipe until the cows come home. But the only way I can convince you that it gives you the coolest, sweetest, cleanest and DRIEST smoke you ever enjoyed is to send you a full-size demonstrator *free!*



DR. J. C. SHOTTON
Prominent Cleveland, Ohio, dentist—inventor of Dr. Shotton's Non-Condensing Sanaton Pipe.

IF YOU are a pipe smoker, I know how skeptical you are about new pipe inventions. So before expecting you to *buy* one of my SANATON pipes, I am offering you this DEMONSTRATOR *free!* My demonstrator will serve the purpose of proving to you that the unique SANATON NON-CONDENSING and EASY-CLEANING features give you the driest, sweetest, coolest and cleanest smoke you ever enjoyed from any pipe, regardless of name, make, or price! I am gambling that if my "demonstrator" does this, you will want one of my better grades. If not, you're out nothing except the 10c I ask for to help pay the postage and handling on the demonstrator.

What This "Demonstrator" Must Prove

Dr. Shotton's non-condensing Sanaton pipe is now being enjoyed by nearly 100,000 pipe smokers—all of whom bought it after *trying* it! Some of these fellows have been smoking pipes for 30, 40, or even 50 years. Some have from 50 to 200 pipes in their collections, and they like the Sanaton better than all the rest put together! There must be a *reason,* and here it is:

Most ordinary pipes, as you know, are equipped with tubes, traps, filters, baffles and gadgets of all kinds whose purpose it is to catch and hold "goo." However, Dr. Shotton *knew* that these gadgets actually caused *condensation* of the "goo" they collected—just as a cool pitcher of ice water in a warm room causes moisture to condense on the outer surface of the glass! He realized that the *real secret* of a dry, sweet pipe is to *prevent* "goo" from forming at all!

Now, what did Dr. Shotton do? Well, instead of placing a catch-all gadget in the Sanaton pipe, he placed a small slotted tube at the bottom of the *bowl!* This tube acts as a NON-condenser, for as you light this pipe, the tube warms up—and there's no cold surface on which "goo" can condense! No condensation, no "goo"! It's as simple as that!

Then Dr. Shotton went a step further. He extended the non-condenser tube *through* the back wall of the pipe and attached a tiny removable screw. Whenever you want to clean out the *tar* that results from tobacco *combustion,* just remove the screw and run a regular pipe cleaner through from end to end. The Sanaton cleans like a gun!

AMAZING FREE OFFER!

As I said before, I don't expect you to buy my regular Sanaton until you try my demonstrator with its non-condensing and easy-cleaning features. So I'll send you a demonstrator FREE *(just send 10c to help cover postage and handling).* Then if I don't hear from you within two weeks, I'll send you one of my *genuine imported briar* Sanatons and you can pay for it when it arrives. But—if you don't like the way my Sanaton *demonstrator* smokes—if you don't find it to be the driest, sweetest, cleanest and coolest smoke you *ever* had, just tell me so and I'll cancel your reservation. Isn't that a fair and square proposition?

Be sure to tell me whether you want me to reserve a Regular Sanaton at $2.50, DeLuxe Sanaton at $3.75 or Sterling Sanaton at $5.00. All my Sanatons are made of genuine aged imported briar—the only difference is in the quality, grain and finish. Be sure to let me know whether you prefer a large, medium or small bowl. *(Only one demonstrator to a person, please.)*

FREE DEMONSTRATOR COUPON

MARK FOSTER, Dept. DF-124
257 Fourth Ave., New York 10, N. Y.

Dear Mark: Please send me one of your Sanaton demonstrator pipes (I am enclosing 10c to cover postage and handling), and reserve a genuine Aged Imported Briar Sanaton for me in the size and grade checked below. If I don't like the way the demonstrator smokes, I will cancel my reservation within two weeks—otherwise send it to me and I will pay the postman for it (plus few cents postage) when it arrives. (Check one box in each column.)

☐ Regular, $2.50	☐ Small bowl
☐ De Luxe, $3.75	☐ Medium bowl
☐ Sterling, $5.00	☐ Large bowl

Name.....

Address.....

City, Zone, State.....

NOTE: If you want your genuine briar Sanaton at once, enclose remittance and I'll send it along with the demonstrator, prepaid. Smoke the demonstrator—and if you don't like it, return the genuine briar Sanaton unsmoked for refund. For your courtesy in remitting with coupon, I will include a big bunch of extra long pipe cleaners free.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE TO FOLKS EARNING LESS THAN $65 A WEEK

New Sickness and Accident Plan Includes $25 Weekly Benefit Feature

Costs Only $12 a Year—Down Payment $2.50 Pays Hospital Benefits for Accidents

The average family has an income of $65 a week or less. Because of the high cost of living, they can't save money to meet sudden doctor or hospital bills, in case accident or sickness strikes. Therefore, the 60-year-old North American Accident Insurance Company of Chicago announces a special plan which gives just the kind of protection such families should have. It pays $25 a week for 10 weeks for certain specified accidents and sicknesses. Also, this Premier Limited Double Duty Policy pays $25 a week for 4 weeks for accidents requiring hospital confinement. Yet the total cost is only $12 a year. The purpose of this new policy is to bring sickness and accident protection within the reach of men and women who do not have large savings with which to meet sudden doctor or hospital bills, or lost income.

This new plan also has a double-indemnity feature covering travel accidents. You receive $50 a week if disabled by an accident in a bus, taxicab street car, train, etc., and $75 a week if the accident requires hospital confinement. There is another new special feature that pays up to $25 cash for doctor bills, even for a minor accident such as a cut finger. In case of accidental death the policy pays one thousand dollars cash to your family. Two thousand dollars if caused by a travel accident.

In addition, it covers many sicknesses including pneumonia, cancer, appendicitis operation, etc., paying the weekly benefits whether confined to home or hospital.

The entire cost is only $12 a year (even this small amount can be paid monthly—$2.50 down and $2.00 a month for 5 months—total cost $12.50) for both men and women between the ages of 15 and 64 inclusive. Between the ages of 65 and 75 the cost is only $18 a year. Protects you 24 hours a day. No reduction in benefits regardless of age. No medical examination is required.

Suppose you are now a member of some worthy hospitalization plan . . . you still need this additional protection. Why? Because only a small percentage of people are confined to a hospital—and even then only for a fraction of the time they are disabled. Most people are confined at home where hospitalization plans do not apply. The North American Plan pays specified benefits regardless of whether you are confined to your home or to a hospital.

North American Accident Insurance Company of Chicago has devoted over sixty years to the underwriting of Accident and Health Insurance. It has paid out over $43,000,000 to grateful policy holders when they needed help most. North American is licensed by the Insurance Department of 47 States and The District of Columbia.

Men and women who would like full details about this new plan are urged to write a letter or postcard for a revealing booklet called "Cash or Sympathy." This booklet is absolutely free. It will come by ordinary mail without charge or obligation of any kind. No agent will call to deliver it. We suggest you get a free copy by mailing coupon to Premier Policy Division, North American Accident Insurance Co. of Chicago, 830 Broad Street, Dept. 151, Newark 2, New Jersey.

MAIL THIS COUPON FOR FREE BOOKLET

North American Accident Insurance Company, 830 Broad St., Dept. 151, Newark 2, New Jersey — Premier Policy Division

Gentlemen:

Please send me a copy of your FREE booklet, "CASH OR SYMPATHY." I understand there is no obligation whatever, and that no one will call on me to deliver this booklet.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

CITY ..... ZONE NO. ..... STATE .....

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED